July 18, 1988

THE NEW YORKER

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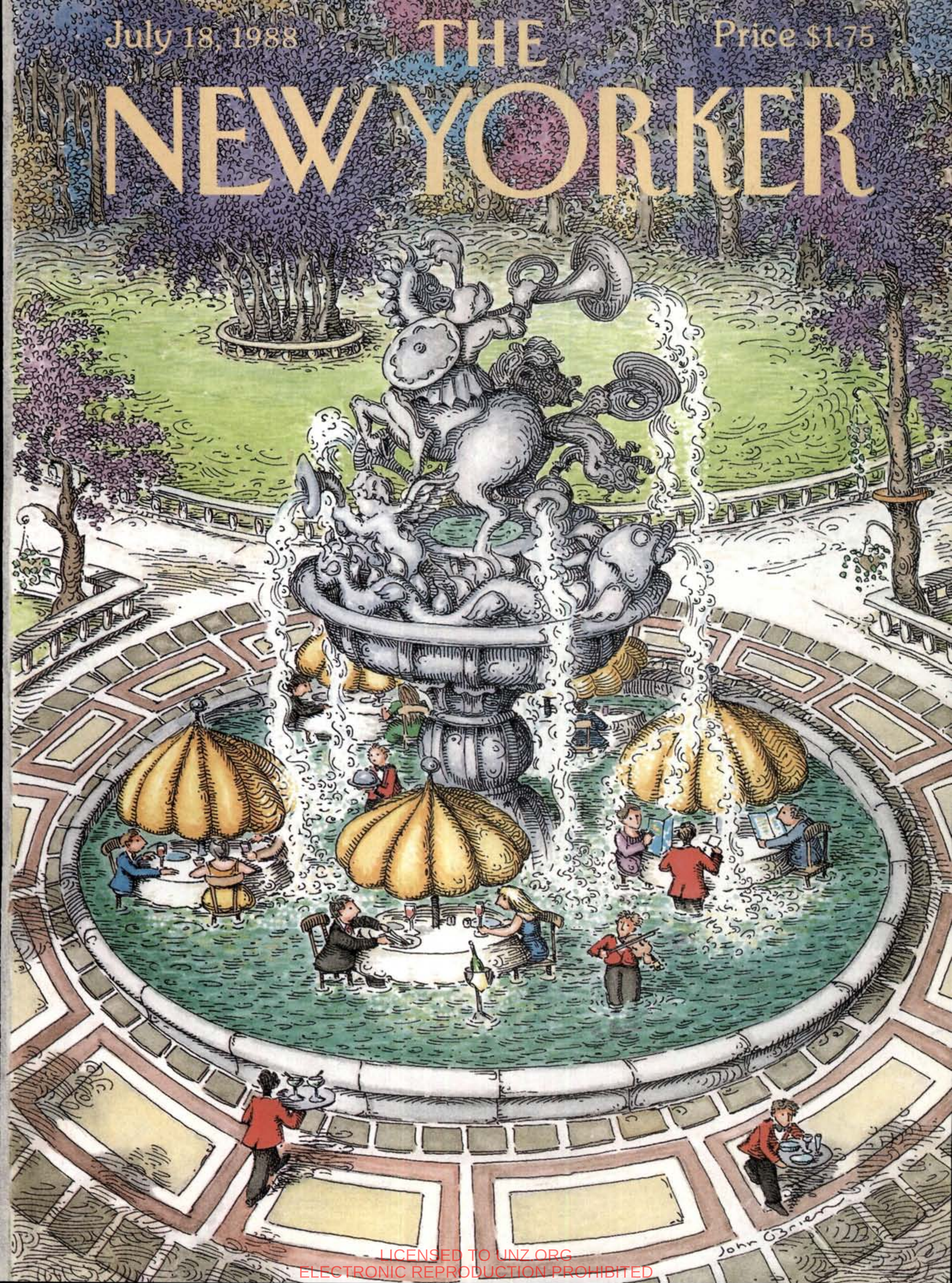
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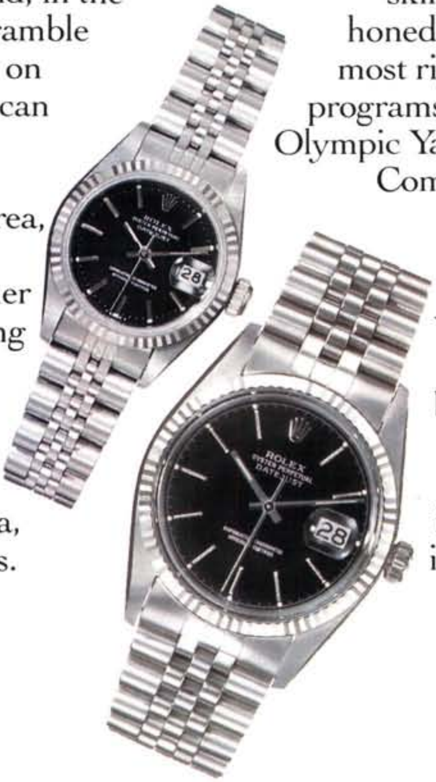

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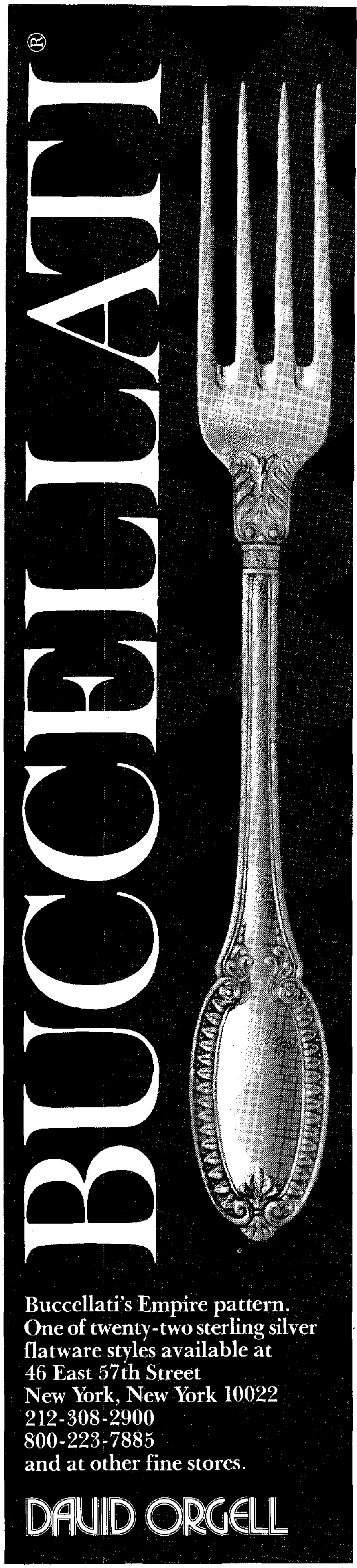

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

JULY 18, 1988

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 4

THE TALK OF THE TOWN 17

"WHY WE'RE SO TAKEN WITH BRITISH ROYALTY" . . . . *George W. S. Trow* 23

"THE GRAMMAR OF LOVE" . . . . *Adam Schwartz* 24

"ABANDONED RAILWAY STATION" (POEM) . . . . *Sherod Santos* 26

"MITES" (POEM) . . . . *John Updike* 30

PROFILES (RAY HICKS) . . . . *Gwen Kinkead* 33

LETTER FROM ALEXANDRIA . . . . *Amos Elon* 42

JAZZ . . . . *Whitney Balliett* 54

AROUND CITY HALL . . . . *Andy Logan* 58

THE THEATRE . . . . *Mimi Kramer* 66

MUSICAL EVENTS . . . . *Andrew Porter* 69

A CRITIC AT LARGE (JAMES AGEE) . . . . *John Hersey* 72

COVER: *John O'Brien*

DRAWINGS: *Charles Sauers, Lee Lorenz, William Hamilton, Ed Arno, Bernard Schoenbaum, Lou Myers, Roz Chast, Sidney Harris, Mischa Richter, Henry Martin, Thomas B. Allen, Stuart Leeds, Jack Ziegler, Donald Reilly, W. B. Park, Richard Cline, Robert Mankoff, Mike Twohy, Tom Cheney, Charles Barsotti*

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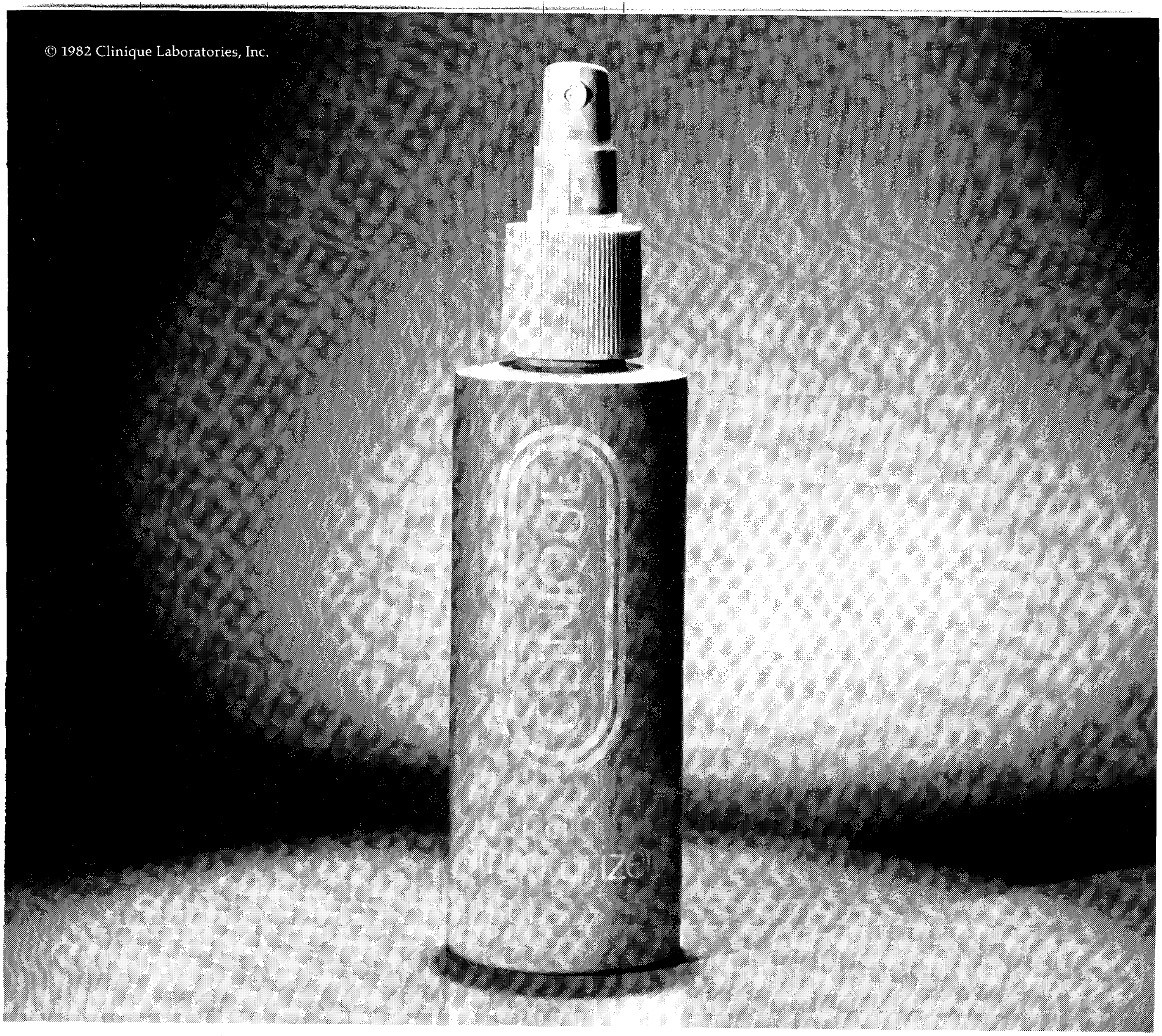

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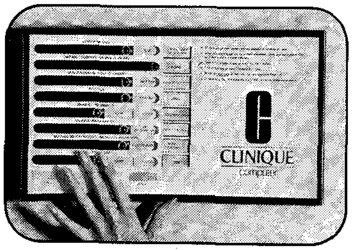

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

American Repertory Theatre—Two plays in repertory. **SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR:** Robert Brustein's adaptation of the Pirandello classic. (Monday and Tuesday, July 11-12, and Wednesday, July 20, at 8.) . . . **BIG TIME: SCENES FROM A SERVICE ECONOMY:** Keith Reddin's one-act satire about terrorism and international finance. Directed by Steven Schachter. (Wednesday and Thursday, July 13-14, at 8; Friday, July 15, at 5 and 9; Saturday, July 16, at 7; and Monday and Tuesday, July 18-19, at 8.) (Joyce, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Ensemble Studio Theatre—Final performances of a one-act-play marathon. "The Man Who Climbed the Pecan Trees," by Horton Foote; "Diphthong," by Michael B. Kaplan; "Slaughter in the Lake," by José Rivera; and "Singing Joy," by Oyamo. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405. Mondays, July 11 and 18, and Wednesday through Friday, July 13-15, at 7:30; Saturday, July 16, at 5 and 9; and Sunday, July 17, at 3 and 7. Closes Monday, July 18.)

Godspell—A revival of the 1971 musical by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

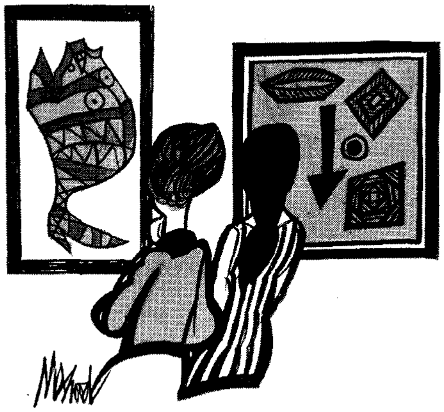
I'll Go On—A one-man performance of excerpts from three novels by Samuel Beckett. Barry McGovern is the one man, and he serves the author well. He also did the adapting, with Gerry Dukes. A production of the Gate Theatre Dublin. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/4/88.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesday through Saturday at 8. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, July 17.)

Into the Woods—This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The amusing first half is like a musical staging of Bruno Bettelheim's "The Uses of Enchantment." The rather nasty second half degenerates into cheap philosophy. The costumes (by Ann Hould-Ward) and sets (by Tony Straiges) are pretty to look at, and the songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. Dick Cavett takes over as the Narrator starting Sunday, July 17. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (11/16/87) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Jika—A play about the South African student movement, written and directed by Maishe Maponya. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, July 31.)

M. Butterfly—David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play is based on an actual case: in 1964, a French diplomat took as his mistress a star of the Beijing Opera, and some twenty years later—when they were both charged with being spies—discovered that "she" was a he. John Lithgow, in the leading role, gives an exceptional performance, and so does B. D. Wong as his lover. Lori Tan Chinn, George N. Martin, and Rose Gregorio give them sound support. (4/4/88) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2. The performance on Monday, July 18, will have two sign-language interpreters.)

Miracolo d'Amore—This theatre piece, conceived and directed by the extraordinary Martha Clarke, was inspired by, among other things, the Punchinello drawings of Tiepolo, the eighteenth-century Venetian artist. The score was composed by Richard Peaslee, the setting and costumes were designed by Robert Israel, and the lighting was by Paul Gallo. The show is a treat for the eye and ear and, occasionally, the funny bone for the mere sixty minutes it runs. (7/11/88) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8, and Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 7:30 and 9:30.)



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17	18	19	20			

Morocco—Sam Freed, George Guidall, and Gordana Rashovich in a play by Allan Havis. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 9. Matinées Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 3.)

The Night of the Iguana—Except for the performances of Jane Alexander and Maria Tucci, this revival of Tennessee Williams' play is negligible. (7/11/88) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Oil City Symphony—Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny, very musical musical. Mr. Hardwick and Miss Monk, by the way, are alumni of "Pump Boys and Dinettes" of blessed memory. (1/18/88) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

O'Neill Centennial Celebration—A disappointing revival of **LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT** alternates with a sunny revival of **AH, WILDERNESS!** Jason Robards and Colleen Dewhurst star in both. (7/4/88). . . . ¶ "Long Day's Journey": Monday and Tuesday, July 11-12, at 8; Wednesday, July 13, at 2 and 8; Thursday and Friday, July 14-15, at 8; Saturday, July 16, at 2 and 8; and Wednesday, July 20, at 2 and 8. . . . "Ah, Wilderness!": Monday and Tuesday, July 18-19, at 8. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

The Phantom of the Opera—The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible, including the overhyped performance of Michael Crawford in the title role. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Road to Mecca—An absorbing, if somewhat elusive, play by the South African dramatist Athol Fugard, about an aging woman sculptor who is mystical and independent, and who resists the attempts of a local minister to persuade her to go into an old-people's home. With Yvonne Bryceland, Mr. Fugard himself, and Kathy Bates, as a young disciple of the sculptor. Mr. Fugard directed. (4/25/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Romance/Romance—A pair of charming one-act musicals that have travelled successfully from Off to Broadway. Scott Bakula and Alison Fraser are as romantic as required in the leading roles. Barry Harman wrote the clever books and lyrics, and Keith Herrmann wrote the engaging scores. Mr. Harman directed. (5/16/88) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Speed-the-Plow—David Mamet's satire on Hollywood is just as scathing, just as acute as his "Glengarry Glen Ross," and even funnier, if that can be imagined. Under the direction of Gregory Mosher, Joe Mantegna and Ron Silver give stunning performances as a pair of sleazy producers, and Madonna does well, too, as a wide-eyed secretary. (5/16/88) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6277. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Tamara—A participatory theatrical encounter, in which the audience must literally follow the characters as they move from room to room in what is supposed to be Gabriele D'Annunzio's villa. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 239-2590. Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 8; Saturdays at 5 and 9; and Sundays at 7. The matinée schedule varies; please call ahead.)

Three Ways Home—S. Epatha Merkerson is a welfare mother; Malcolm-Jamal Warner is her unmanageable sixteen-year-old son; and Mary McDonnell is a volunteer social worker assigned to her case. All of them are splendid. The play, by Casey Kurtti, much of it in monologues, is comic and sad and never dull. (6/6/88) (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**ANYTHING GOES:** This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **BROADWAY BOUND:** A rueful comedy in which Neil Simon studies the middle-class depths from which he sprang and has kept springing. Joan Rivers plays Eugene Jerome's mother. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **BURN THIS:** A play by Lanford Wilson, with Eric Roberts as a foulmouthed restaurant manager who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest long run recently turned twenty-eight. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie, and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 2:15, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE:** Carol Kane and Bruce Weitz in Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties, with Jim Dale. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Tim Shew and Norman Large star in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, but the real standouts of the production are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SARAFINA!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **A SHAYNA MAIDEL:** A well-wrought and deeply moving play by Barbara Lebow about a Polish-Jewish family torn apart by the events of the Hitler era. The production is beautifully directed by Mary B. Robinson. Bring lots of Kleenex to this one, but expect to leave uplifted. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STARLIGHT EXPRESS:** A bore on roller skates. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

"SERIOUS FUN!"—Opening performances of a three-week series that runs through Thursday, Aug. 4—Thursday, July 14, at 7:30, and Friday and Saturday, July 15-16, at 8: The New York première of "The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat," a chamber opera by Michael Nyman, based on the book by Oliver Sacks. With Frederick Westcott, baritone; Marni Nixon, soprano; and Jon Duykers, tenor. Mr. Nyman will conduct a small orchestra. . . . ¶ Tuesday, July 19, at 8: Kathy Rose in a dance-film production, and the Elodie Lauten ensemble in five new works composed for a Fairlight computer, piano, and strings. . . . ¶ Wednesday, July 20, at 8: Laurie Anderson. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911.)

WITHOUT YOU I'M NOTHING—Sandra Bernhard in a one-woman show. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10:30; and Sundays at 5:30 and 9.)

JACKIE MASON'S "THE WORLD ACCORDING TO ME!"—The comedian's one-man show. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

CANCIONES DE MI PADRE—Linda Ronstadt and a company of twenty-one in a revue of mariachi songs and dances. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2. Closes Saturday, July 30.)

DANCE

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DANCE—Cont'd

through Friday, July 12-15, at 8; and Saturday, July 16, at 2 and 8.)

National Ballet of Canada—Opening performances of a one-week engagement that will *run through Saturday, July 23*—Monday, July 18, at 7:30: The U.S. premières of "La Ronde" and "Blue Snake." . . . ¶ Tuesday, July 19, at 8, and Wednesday, July 20, at 2 and 8: *"Onegin," with guest artists Natalia* Makarova and Fernando Bujones. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Pilobolus—Appearing for a single performance of "Molly's Not Dead," "Land's Edge," and "Day Two." (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Monday, July 18, at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautically appointed bar and restaurant. Any swaying you may notice yourself doing is probably generated by the musicians, who perform amidships on a railed-in platform. **VALERY PONOMAREV,** a Russian-born trumpeter and a graduate of Art Blakey's school of hard bop, directs a quartet Wednesday and Thursday, July 13-14; pianist **ANDY LAVERNE** leads a trio Friday and Saturday, July 15-16. First set at ten.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A neat-as-a-pin cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. **PATTI PAGE** is here Tuesdays through Saturdays, unburdening herself of some of her megahits. (If you're keeping track, thirteen of her singles have gone gold, and the only record to outsell her "Tennessee Waltz" is Bing Crosby's "White Christmas.") Shows at nine and eleven.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A really blue but not really New York jazz club; the idea for the brass plaques that are engraved with the names of visiting jazz stars and embedded in the blue tables appears to have been borrowed from Hollywood. A combo run by **ELVIN JONES,** a bang-up post-bop drummer not often heard in New York, begins a six-night visit on Tuesday, July 19; pianist **HILTON RUIZ'S** group is also on the bill. First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—On the east side of the building, behind a dusty display window, there's a New York *Post* review of a Santana concert that took place here circa 1978; curatorial neglect seems to have made it a permanent exhibit. Inside, it's **UNCLE BONSAI** and **TIMBUK 3** on Wednesday, July 13. Uncle Bonsai is a Seattle-based vocal group (one countertenor, two sopranos) whose members sing in perfect harmony whether they are bashing cheerleaders ("Cheerleaders on Drugs") or needling boys ("Boys Want Sex in the Morning"). Timbuk 3 is a kind of low-budget trio (the third member is a rhythm machine) whose live parts (a husband-and-wife team) are responsible for several well-made satirical songs, including "The Future's So Bright, I Gotta Wear Shades" and "Facts About Cats." **LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III,** the kind of folksinger who will begin a lullaby with the words "shut up," has the floor Friday and Saturday, July 15-16. **MARTI JONES,** a specialist in country-rock heartaches and low-grade fevers, sings Monday and Tuesday, July 18-19; some of the people whose songs she has recorded—**GRAHAM PARKER, JANIS IAN, DON DIXON** (who is also her producer), and **JOHN HIATT**—will appear with her. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

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Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great up-close view from a barstool (unless there are a lot of standees, which is usually the case) of first-rate pianists, bassists, and, occasionally, horn players. Tenor saxophonist **GEORGE COLEMAN** works with pianist **HAROLD MABERN** and bassist **JAMIL NASSER** through Saturday, July 16; **KIRK LIGHTSEY,** a pianist who tears around the keyboard in a joyfully busy way, teams up with bassist **CECIL MC BEE** starting Monday, July 18. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Long communal tables swathed in pink and a bandstand panelled in oak. **AL GREY,** the former Basie-ite who gets laughing sounds and big wa-was and complete sentences out of his old talking trombone, leads a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, July 12-17; **LOU DONALDSON,** an amiable hard-bop altoist, brings in a quartet on Tuesday, July 19. Mondays belong to baritone-sax man **HAMIET BLUIETT** and his big band. Music from nine. Dining.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make you forget all about it. **SONNY FORTUNE,** a hard-blowing alto saxophonist, and **ARNIE LAWRENCE,** a somewhat gentler altoist, share a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, July 12-17. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—A satisfying combination of Chinese food and homegrown music. Rubberneckers may see the moon wheeling by the greenhouse roof on its nightly tour of romantic Manhattan. **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** a young wispy-looking California pianist who keeps her spike heels tapping while playing in the sturdy old Harlem stride style, leads a trio Tuesday through Thursday, July 12-14; pianist **ROLAND HANNA** is in charge Friday through Sunday, July 15-17, and Tuesday and Wednesday, July 19-20. Music from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from six on Sundays.

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side spa, one flight up from the hurly-burly. **DICK HYMAN,** who has Jelly Roll Morton and Zez Confrey and obscure Irving Berlin at his fingertips, will be at the dining-room grand on Monday, July 18. The rest of the schedule: Tuesdays, July 12 and 19, singer-pianist **RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT;** Wednesdays, July 13 and 20, pianist **CAROL BRITTO'S** trio; Thursday, July 14, singer Judy Barnett's band; Friday, July 15, pianist **MICKEY TUCKER'S** trio; and Saturday, July 16, pianist **JOEL FORRESTER'S** threesome. Sundays are jam-session nights. Music from eight Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy corner bar and restaurant with a piano at the center of things. **ROLAND HANNA** rocks and rhapsodizes on it, with support from bassist **STAFFORD JAMES,** Tuesday through Saturday, July 12-16; **HERMAN FOSTER** and **JAY LEONHART** swing into action on Tuesday, July 19. Pianist **HARRY CONNICK, JR.,** the latest good news from New Orleans, flies all by himself on Sundays and Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor retreat that features avant-garde jazz, advanced and unadvanced rock, medicinal teas, medicinal beer, and space to think your thoughts in. **JONATHAN RICHMAN,** who wrote a good song about Vincent van Gogh ("the baddest painter since Jan Vermeer") and an eloquent one about going to the beach and an O.K. one about Walter Johnson, performs Tuesday and Wednesday, July 12-13. Music after nine.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—This hangout for homesick Texans, French tourists, and local yokels brags that it's "the biggest and best honky-tonk north of Abilene." Big it ain't, but it does feature some genuine honky-tonk music, a souvenir stand, and TV monitors (which permit you to watch the action onstage in case your view of it is obscured by a cowboy or a structural element). **CARL PERKINS,** the Tennessee rockabilly man, will be around on Monday and Tuesday, July 11-12; **FOSTER & LLOYD,** a pair of soft-boiled *country-rock boys, perform Friday and* Saturday, July 15-16; **DELBERT MC CLINTON,** a veteran Texas honky-tonker, has the floor on Wednesday, July 20. Music after nine. Hot vittles.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and their high-heeled foxes. Two bands that specialize in jazz from the archives are sharing the bill. One is **VINCE GIORDANO'S NIGHTHAWKS,** a ten-piece outfit that is known for its recreations of music played by the orchestras of Fletcher Henderson, Jean Goldkette, and others. The second group, led by a young guitarist named **FRANK VIGNOLA,** models itself after Django Reinhardt's Quintette du Hot Club de France. Shows at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Fifty years ago, people practiced the jitterbug and the foxtrot in this ballroom; today's patrons listen mainly to rock, which issues from speakers the size of mobile homes, and sometimes engage in a combination of exercise and intimacy known as slam dancing. **NINA HAGEN,** a German-born rock singer who does assorted vocal tricks (she wails operatically, speed-raps in three languages, makes Munchkin-like sounds) while having a big Continental laugh at the pointlessness of it all, performs Thursday and Friday, July 14-15; **LIVE SKULL,** a caterwauling East Village band, will be here Saturday, July 16. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Ample seating for the contemplative. Monday and Tuesday, July 11-12, **TOURÉ KUNDA,** a Senegalese pop band; Wednesday and Thursday, July 13-14, Musicians of the Nile; Friday, July 15, **LOREMIL MACHADO** and **PÉ-DE-BOI;** Saturday, July 16, Arrow, a soul-calypso singer; and Sunday, July 17, reggae singer **SISTER CAROL.** Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays, and from ten on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Speakeasy, 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—A central Village lounge for folkies and others who practice low-decibel (but not necessarily low-voltage) music. **FRANK CHRISTIAN,** a blues-minded guitarist and folksinger, holds forth Friday and Saturday, July 15-16. **LEN CHANDLER,** a folksinger from the days when folksingers were also political activists (he sang and marched with the civil-rights protesters of the sixties), performs on Sunday, July 17. Bob Dylan, who is said to have lifted the melody of his "Death of Emmett Till" from a Chandler song, won't be here on Wednesday, July 20, but some of his imitators will be, all of them competing to approximate Bob most nearly. This contest is an annual Speakeasy event. Shows nightly from about eight-thirty. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—**TOMMY FLANAGAN** lays his graceful hands on the piano in this Village temple of jazz (pressed-tin ceiling, grainy b. & w. photos of your favorite demigods, knee-to-knee seating) Tuesdays through Sundays. He's accompanied by bassist **GEORGE MRAZ** and drummer **KENNY WASHINGTON.** Mondays, July 11 and 18, have been set aside for a threesome led by the Tokyo pianist **YOSUKE YAMASHITA.** Shows from ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—"Irish" is what the canopy above the entrance to this bar says, but rock and roll is what the boys and girls in the back room mainly do. The **KINSEY REPORT,** a younger-generation Chicago blues band led by a guitarist and onetime Bob Marley sideman named **DONALD KINSEY,** will be around Friday, July 15, and Sunday, July 17. Shows after nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the gym-size downstairs room, Latin-jazz bands play for their excitable fans on Mondays after nine-thirty. Thursday through Saturday, July 14-16, the trio run by **MC COY TYNER,** a pianist who leaves few notes untouched while building his oceanic masses of sound, shares the stage with alto saxophonist **ARTHUR BLYTHE** and a string quartet. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the airy space known as the Terrace Bar, **NEVILLE DICKIE,** an English pianist who is fond of ragtime and stride and other early-American piano styles, teams up with **TERRY WALDO,** a Yank pianist inclined in the same direction, Tuesday through Sunday, July 12-17; **JIMMY GOURLEY,** a bop-rooted guitarist who has lived in Paris for the past thirty years, comes in with bassist Dominique Lemerle on Tuesday, July 19. On Tuesdays, the visiting duo trades sets with **HELLMAN'S ANGELS,** a string trio whose head angel, **DAPHNE HELLMAN,** plays the harp. Music from ten.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. **CHRISTOPHER HOLLYDAY,** the teen-age alto sax sensation from the Hub, will be here Tuesday through Sunday, July 12-17, with a quartet that includes old pros **WALTER DAVIS, JR.,** and **RON CARTER.** The septet that the Brooklyn composer **HENRY THREADGILL** calls his Sextett—it has two tat-tatting drummers, two string players, a trombonist, a trumpeter, and himself on woodwinds—plays his new-fashioned marches, dirges, and stomps starting Tuesday, July 19. Mondays are reserved for saxophonist **BOB MINTZER'S** big band.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The big room in this student rest stop (Columbia U. is across the street) has a non-institutional cafeteria, a bar that can seat a marching band, and a jukebox. The smaller room has tables, booths, a couple of hanging plants, and live jazz. Trumpeter **MANNY DURAN** leads a quartet Wednesday through Sunday, July 13-17; on Friday and Saturday, tenor saxophonist **ROLAND ALEXANDER** makes it a quintet. On Mondays, comedians stand up and fall down. Shows from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. **JANE JARVIS,** who used to play the organ for buzzing thousands at Shea Stadium and County Stadium (in Milwaukee), plays the piano here every night but Sunday. **MILT HINTON** is her left-hand man through Saturday, July 16; **MAJOR HOLLEY** relieves him starting Monday, July 18. Music from eight. Closed Sundays.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

George Thorogood & the Destroyers—With Brian Setzer. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Thursday, July 14, at 8.)

Victor Borge—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Thursday through Saturday, July 14-16, and Wednesday, July 20, at 8. Through Saturday, July 23.

Third World—Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. Friday, July 15, at 9. For tickets, call 757-3100.

Royal Hawaiian Band—Carnegie Hall. Saturday, July 16, at 2:30.

Preservation Hall Jazz Band—Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, July 19, at 8.

Jazz in July—The first two in a series of six concerts. Tuesday, July 19: Maureen McGovern and the Dick Hyman quintet. . . . ¶ Wednesday, July 20: Ralph Sutton, Derek Smith and Dick Hyman, Art Hodes, and Carrie Smith. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Evenings at 8.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES

George Ault (1891-1948)—Works on paper. Through July 29. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

José Campeche (1751-1809)—A Puerto Rican who recorded the high society of San Juan in his portraits. Forty-seven of his paintings are currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum. Through Sept. 25. (Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St. Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Laura Foreman / Bonnie Lucas—Assemblages. / Paintings on paper and assemblages. Through July 23. (Yi, 249 Centre St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

Ada Gilmore (1883-1955)—Color woodcuts and watercolors. Through July 30. (Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Saturdays.)

Julio González (1876-1942)—Paintings and drawings. Through Aug. 19. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Sylvia Guirey—Five abstract paintings based on Fragonard's "La Bascule." Through July 22. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

David Hockney—A number of gallery shows are being held to coincide with his retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum. Drawings at Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through July 29. . . . ¶ Prints at Drake, 50 W. 57th St. Through July 23. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . ¶ Early graphics at Ingber, 415 West Broadway. Through July 30. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . ¶ Photographs at Kasmin, 580 Broadway. Through Saturday, July 16. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

Oliver Johnson—New paintings and drawings. Through Aug. 26. (Felicie, 141 E. 56th St.)

Stephanie Brody Lederman—Paintings. Through Friday, July 15. (Katzen Brown, 475 Broome St.)

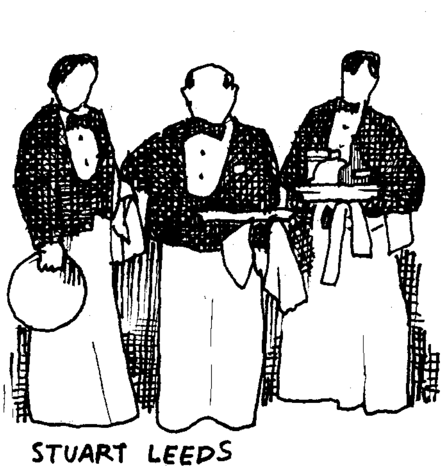
Charles Moore—Drawings the architect made for such projects as the Beverly Hills Civic Center and a condominium complex in Sea Ranch, California. Through Aug. 12. (Protetch, 560 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

Ree Morton (1936-77)—More than twenty of the sculptor's sketchbooks—containing drawings, quotations, and reminders (such as "Read some Montana history" and "Ask to meet Louise Bourgeois")—are shown in cases, along with selected photocopied pages. Through Aug. 27. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Saturdays.)

Dennis Oppenheim—A model and drawings for a sculpture the artist recently installed in Seoul's Olympic Park. Through Aug. 12. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

Picasso (1881-1973)—Paintings, sculptures, and prints from 1950 to 1973. Through July 29. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St.)

Milton Resnick—Densely painted abstractions done in the late fifties. Through July 29. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)



Fulvio Testa—Dark small-scale watercolors of valleys, alleyways, and hills. Through July 29. (Bernard, 33 E. 74th St.)

Group Shows—At the **BAGHOOMIAN,** 611 Broadway: Paintings and other works by George Condo, John Armleder, Vahé Fattal, and others. Through Friday, July 15. . . . **BLUM HELMAN,** 20 W. 57th St.: Paintings by Michael Young, Jack Barth, and Joan Nelson. Through July 29. . . . **BRANDT,** 568 Broadway: Betty Beaumont, Francesc Torres, and others in a show of works in various mediums. Through July 22. . . . **DINTENFASS,** 50 W. 57th St.: Seven guest artists, including Lynda Bailey, Elizabeth Jordan, and Eric Sparre, showing sculptures and works on paper. Through Monday, July 18. . . . **THE DRAWING CENTER,** 35 Wooster St.: A selection of sixty-nine drawings that the curator has categorized as art that copies art. Michelangelo, Dürer, Watteau, Cézanne, and Picasso are among the copiers. Through July 23. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . **HERSTAND,** 24 W. 57th St.: Sculptures and drawings by Auguste Rodin, Isamu Noguchi, and Jenny Lee, among others. Through Sept. 16. . . . **HOFFMAN,** 429 West Broadway: Paintings by Elizabeth Magill, Shahnaz Said, Yuko Shiraishi, and Suzanne Treister. Through July 29. . . . **JACOBSON,** 50 W. 57th St.: Works that create an illusion of depth, including a painting by Gregory Amenoff, a drawing by Wayne Thiebaud, a construction by Joseph Cornell, and sculptures by David Kezur. Through July 29. . . . **KOURY WINGATE,** 578 Broadway: Dike Blair, General Idea, and Cary Smith are a few of the painters and sculptors in this exhibit of new works. Through July 22. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **LITTLEJOHN SMITH,** 133 Greene St.: Paintings, constructions, sculptures, and photographs in a show highlighting the influence of billboard art. The artists include James Rosenquist, Walker Evans, and Julie Heffernan. Through July 30. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . **NATURE MORTE,** 204 E. 10th St.: A show of architectural plans and models for commercial art galleries which were submitted to a gallery-sponsored competition. The architects include Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio, Michael Sorkin, and Lynne Breslin and Shauna Mosseri. Through July 24. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . **NOLAN,** 560 Broadway: Works on paper by, among others, Miriam Cahn, Sigmar Polke, and Arnulf Rainer. Through July 29. . . . **PEARL,** 420 West Broadway: Works by three painters from Chicago—Didier Nolet, Dan Gustin, and Rodney Carswell—and by a sculptor from Philadelphia, Stephen Robin. Through Aug. 12. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **POSTMASTERS,** 66 Avenue A, near 4th St.: Paintings and sculptures by Jan Frank, David Diao, and Silvia Kolbowski, among others. Through Sunday, July 17. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . **SCHMIDT BINGHAM,** 41 W. 57th St.: Paintings that the gallery calls "oxymorons in art," by Martha Mayer Erlebacher, Joyce Treiman, Donald Roller Wilson, and others. Through July 22. . . . **SHAINMAN,** 560 Broadway: Large and small paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs by Bruno Ceccobelli, Petah Coyne, and others. Through July 29. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **SHARPE,** 152 Wooster St.: Sculptures by Terry Rosenberg and Steve Wood, and paintings by Stephen Williams. Through Aug. 5. . . . **RUTH SIEGEL,** 24 W. 57th St.: Paintings in various mediums by Pat Sutton, Robert Jessup, Robert Berlind, and others. Also, sculptures by Colin Gray. Through July 29. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **TILTON,** 24 W. 57th St.: Paintings and drawings by Hispanic artists, including Patricia Gonzalez and Robert Gil de Montes. Through Aug. 15. . . . **TOLL,** 146 Greene St.: Paintings by Louise Fishman, Joan Mitchell, and David Reed. Through July 28. . . . **WEBER,** 142 Greene St.: Photographs by Thomas Joshua Cooper, a conceptual installation by Franz Erhard Walther, and a series of more than two hundred works in plaster by Allan McCollum. Through July 22. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **YORK,** 21 E. 65th St.: Paintings and works on paper by Joseph Stella, James Wells Champney, and Lilly Martin Spencer, among others. Through July 29. . . . **ZARRE,** 379 West Broadway: Abstract paintings, including works by Susan Crile, William Fares, and Jonathan Santlofer. Through July 30. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

¶ Exhibitions of works by gallery artists can also be seen at: **ALEXANDER,** 59 Wooster St. . . . **BURGIN,** 270 Lafayette St. (Closed Mon-

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ART—Cont'd

days.) . . . **DE NAGY,** 41 W. 57th St. . . . **GALERIE ST. ETIENNE,** 24 W. 57th St. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **HEIDENBERG,** 50 W. 57th St. . . . **MARCUS,** 578 Broadway. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **M-13,** 72 Greene St. (Open Saturdays.) . . . **NOSEI,** 100 Prince St.

PHOTOGRAPHY

KAREKIN GOEKJIAN—Photographs taken at night by the light of the moon, a strobe, and a halogen flashlight. The time exposures range from fifteen to forty minutes. Through July 28. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

PEGGY JARRELL KAPLAN—Photographs of Mark Morris, Robert Wilson, other well-known figures, and the cast of "The Mahabharata." Through Wednesday, July 20. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

PAUL OWEN / KAREN HALVERSON—Photographs taken at night in the Catskills (by the former) and in New York City (by the latter). Through July 23. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Closed Mondays; opens Saturdays at noon.)

GARRY WINOGRAND (1928-84)—Black-and-white photographs dating from the fifties, sixties, and seventies. Through Aug. 31. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St. Open Saturdays. A retrospective of the artist's work can currently be seen at the Museum of Modern Art.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The earliest work in the David Hockney retrospective is a self-portrait done when the artist was seventeen. Mr. Hockney has also recorded the Acoustiguide tape for the show, on which he explains his ideas and techniques. Through Aug. 14. Complementary exhibits at André Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.; Douglas Drake, 50 W. 57th St.; Paul Kasmin, 580 Broadway; and Ingber, 415 West Broadway. . . . ¶ Ninety paintings and drawings by Paul Klee, gifts to the museum from Heinz Berggruen. Through July 31. . . . ¶ Religious paintings and portraits by the eighteenth-century Puerto Rican artist José Campeche. Through Sept. 25. Works by the artist are also at Museo del Barrio. (The Metropolitan is open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Deconstructivist Architecture," drawings, models, and site plans by Coop Himmelblau, Peter Eisenman, Frank Gehry, Zaha M. Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, Daniel Libeskind, and Bernard Tschumi. The chief organizer of the exhibit was Philip Johnson, who describes these architects as having eschewed harmony, unity, and clarity for the sake of disharmony, fracturing, and mystery. Through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ The Garry Winogrand retrospective. Through Aug. 16. Pace-MacGill has a complementary show. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.) . . . **NOTE:** The museum's sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 10; on those nights musicians from the Juilliard School perform works by John Cage and others at 7:30.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A retrospective of works by Georges Braque. Through Sept. 11. . . . ¶ A loan show of sixty modern paintings from the National Gallery in Prague, consisting entirely of works that are in America for the first time. The artists include Cézanne, Chagall, Klimt, Gauguin, and Matisse, and their Czech counterparts. Through Sept. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Frank Gehry's architecture will be surveyed in more than two hundred and fifty drawings, photographs, and models. The projects represented will include the Fishdance Restaurant in Kobe, Japan, and the Laser Laboratory Building at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. Also on display will be several walk-in constructions. Starts Thursday, July 14. . . . ¶ A selection of seventy paintings and sculptures by artists who have transformed botanical forms into abstractions. Arthur Dove, Nancy Graves, and Bill Jensen are among those represented. Through Sunday, July 17. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

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BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"The Uses of Photography in Contemporary Art," a small exhibit from the permanent collection which includes works by Julie Wachtel, Ellen Carey, and David Hockney. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

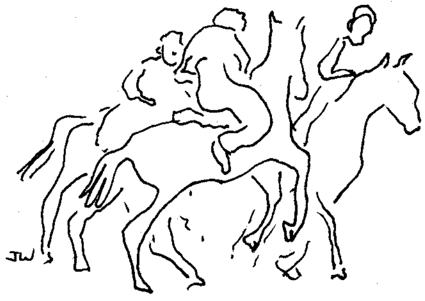
AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A hundred and fifty pre-Columbian artifacts from the permanent collection. Through Aug. 15. . . . ¶ Lobsang Samten—a Buddhist monk and an attendant to the Dalai Lama—creates a sand mandala before your eyes. Mr. Samten does not create on Mondays. Through Aug. 21. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St.—A show on the contemporary partnership between artists and architects, focussing on the artists' contributions. There are, for instance, stone seats by Scott Burton that are like those he made for the Equitable Center, and objects in glass by three artists who worked on the redesigned Rainbow Room. Through Sept. 4. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Two feather suits (complete with feather crowns) that Roger Chapelain-Midy designed for the Paris Opéra's production of "Die Zauberflöte" are among the costumes on display in an exhibit documenting the history of the Paris Opéra House. Also included are costume designs, in watercolors, by Erté, André Derain, and Yves Saint Laurent; original architectural studies by Charles Garnier; and stage jewelry. Through Sept. 25. . . . ¶ The museum's garden is currently dotted with lawn chairs in every conceivable style. These bizarre—but comfortable—pieces are the work of thirty-one San Francisco Bay Area artists, including Martha Schwartz, Veronica di Rosa, and Daniel Friedlander. Through Sept. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

FRICK COLLECTION, 1 E. 70th St.—Paintings and drawings Henry Clay Frick collected as a young connoisseur in the early eighteen-eighties have been brought from his Pittsburgh residence, Clayton, and hung alongside some of the Old Masters he acquired later. In the former group are works by Jean-Charles Cazin, Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret, and William M. Harnett. Through Aug. 7. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GROLIER CLUB, 47 E. 60th St.—A retrospective of etchings, woodcuts, and lithographs by the English painter Graham Sutherland (1903-1980). The prints range from pastoral landscapes to expressionistic renderings of birds and insects. Through Sept. 30. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5.)



JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A show in which Jewish themes are explored in video art: installations by Juan Downey, Beryl Korot, and Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman, mounted in three separate galleries; and six videos that run on a single, continuous tape for just over two hours, including "Harold's Bar Mitzvah," by Bart Friedman, and "Women in Camps," by Barbara Rosenthal. Through Sept. 1. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—A comprehensive exhibit of the works of Beatrix Potter (1866-1943) which includes watercolors of her familiar subjects (Peter Rabbit, Jemima Puddle-Duck) and her not so familiar subjects—insects, plants, and fossils. Through Aug. 21. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The Uffizi Gallery, in Florence, repository of nearly thirteen hundred artists' self-portraits, has sent a selection of thirty—by Andrea del Sarto, Annibale Carracci, Walter Crane, and others—in an exchange show with the National Academy, which sent a selection of its thirteen hundred self-portraits to Florence. Through July 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

SPORTS

BASEBALL—Yankees at Yankee Stadium (293-6000): Vs. Chicago, Thursday and Friday, July 14-15, at 7:30; Saturday, July 16, at 4:05 (the annual Old-Timers Day festivities will begin at 2, and will include a couple of innings involving members of the 1978 Yankees and other former Yankees); and Sunday, July 17, at 1:30. . . . ¶ Texas, Monday through Wednesday, July 18-20, at 7:30.

RACING—At **BELMONT:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1; through Monday, Aug. 1. . . . **MONMOUTH PARK,** Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. . . . **ATLANTIC CITY RACE COURSE,** McKee City, N.J.: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:15. The United Nations Handicap, Wednesday, July 20.

TROTTING—At **MEADOWLANDS:** Weeknights at 7:30; through Friday, Aug. 19. . . . **YONKERS RACEWAY:** Nightly at 8, and Tuesdays at 1; through Wednesday, Aug. 3. . . . **SARATOGA RACEWAY,** Saratoga Springs: Weeknights at 7:45.

MUSIC

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—Tuesday evening, July 12: A new production of "Rigoletto," with Faith Esham, Susanne Marsee, Frederick Burchinal, and Richard Leech; conducted by Elio Boncompagni. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, July 13: "La Bohème," with Frances Ginsberg, Margaret Cusack, Robert Grayson, and Stanley Wexler; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, July 14: "La Traviata," with Marilyn Mims, Stephen O'Mara, and Pablo Elvira; Michael Morgan. . . . ¶ Friday evening, July 15: "Die Zauberflöte," with Elizabeth Hynes, Rachel Rosales, Gran Wilson, Stephen Dickson, and Rodney Godshall; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, July 16: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Leslie Richards, Stefano Algieri, and Rodger Hugh Wangerin; and "Pagliacci," with Marianna Christos, John Absalom, Pablo Elvira, and Kenneth Shaw; Sergiu Comissiona conducting both. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, July 16: "The Merry Widow," with Leigh Munro, Ruth Golden, Robert Orth, and Paul Austin Kelly; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, July 19-20: "The New Moon," with alternating casts; Jim Coleman conducting. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2. Through Sunday, Nov. 20.)

Mostly Mozart Festival—Opening concerts of the series, which will run through Saturday, Aug. 27. Tuesday and Wednesday, July 12-13, at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducting the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, with Vladimir Feltsman, piano, and Frederica von Stade, mezzo-soprano. . . . ¶ Thursday, July 14, at 8: Christopher Hogwood conducting an ensemble of original instruments, with Christopher Krueger, flute; Stanley Ritchie, violin; and Myron Lutzke, cello. . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, July 15-16, at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducting the Festival Orchestra, with Bella Davidovich, piano, and Hei-Kyung Hong, soprano. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 17, at 7:30: The Tokyo String Quartet, with James Galway, flute. . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday, July 19-20, at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducting the Festival Orchestra, with James Galway and Eugenia Zukerman, flute. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424.)

Elaine Comparone and Bach Family Strings—Harpsichord and a chamber ensemble in a program of early concertos and sonatas by Mozart and Haydn. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Wednesday, July 13, at 8. For tickets, call 666-9427.)

Annapolis Brass Quintet—Performing mostly Renaissance music. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. Wednesday, July 20, at 5:30. For information about tickets, call 288-0700.)

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

New York Shakespeare Festival—Free performances of **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**, with Blythe Danner, Kevin Kline, Jerry Stiller, and Phoebe Cates. The first of two productions to be presented in the Delacorte Theatre this summer. (Central Park near W. 81st St. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Through Sunday, July 24. For information about tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center—Tuesday, July 12, at 7: Robert Bonfiglio, harmonica; Michael Newman, guitar; and a string quartet. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 16, at 7:30: Martin Josman directing the National Chorale (rain date, July 18). . . . ¶ Tuesday, July 19, at 7: Doriot Anthony Dwyer, flute, and Liona Boyd, classical guitarist.

Music Festival on the Pier—The Miller beer people's summer series. Tuesday, July 12: Dion, with Ronnie Spector. . . . ¶ Friday, July 15: Erasure, with Shona Laing. . . . ¶ Wednesday, July 20: Bob Goldthwait, the Turtles (with Flo and Eddie), and Wilson Pickett. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. Evenings at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 249-8870.)

Central Park Band Shell—Thursday, July 14, at 7:30: Vincent La Selva conducting the New York Grand Opera in a performance of Verdi's "I Masnadieri." . . . ¶ Friday, July 15, at 8:30: Georg Osterman & Company, with Shapiro & Smith. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 16, at 3: Nappy Brown. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 17, at 3: Dissidenten. (Mid-Park at 72nd St. For raindate information, call 860-1335.)

Music Cruise—With Martha Reeves & the Vandellas. (Hudson River Dayliner, Pier 81, Twelfth Ave. at 41st St. Friday, July 15, at 8. For tickets, call 399-4444.)

Riverside Park Rotunda—Saturday, July 16, at 7 (rain date, July 17): Chamber Sound. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 17, at 4 (rain date, July 24): Tommy Flanagan and Barry Harris. (W. 79th St., near the Boat Basin.)

Washington Square Park—Tali Makell conducting the Festival Orchestra. The first in a series of five weekly concerts. (Tuesday, July 19, at 8. In the event of rain, the concert will take place in the Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl.)

IN THE COUNTRY

Summerfare—**"LE NOZZE DI FIGARO,"** the contemporary version by Peter Sellars and Craig Smith. With an orchestra and vocalists. (Wednesday, July 13, and Friday, July 15, at 8; Sunday, July 17, at 2:30; and Wednesday, July 20, at 8.) . . . **"DUBBELSPOOR,"** a dance piece with mirrors, based on a text by Samuel Beckett and performed by Beppie Blankert and Caroline Dokter. (Wednesday, July 13, and Friday, July 15, at 8:30; Saturday, July 16, at 7; and Sunday, July 17, at 2:30 and 7.) . . . **JOHN CAGE'S "EUROPERAS 1 & 2,"** the composer's précis of Grand Opera, performed by the Frankfurt Opera. Three dozen video screens round out the cast. (Thursday, July 14, and Saturday, July 16, at 8, and Sunday, July 17, at 7.) . . . **"ACTUAL SHO,"** a theatre work by George Coates which makes use of singers, dancers, electronic devices, and a swivel-cone stage. With music by Marc Ream. (Friday and Saturday, July 15-16, at 8:30, and Sunday, July 17, at 5.) . . . **"A BONE TO PICK,"** with dance by Laurie Booth and music by Harry de Wit. (Friday and Saturday, July 15-16, at 8:30.) . . . **"LINE ONE,"** a rock musical performed in English by the original Berlin cast. (Wednesday, July 20, at 8.) (State University of New York at Purchase. Through Sunday, July 31. For information about tickets and about round-trip bus transportation from Lincoln Center, call 1-914 253-5900.)

Caramoor Music Festival—Thursday, July 14, at 4:15: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, with Scott Kuney, classical guitarist. . . . ¶ Friday, July 15, at 9: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, with Shirley Love, mezzo-soprano. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 16, at 8:30: The Orchestra of St. Luke's, John Nelson, conductor, in an all-Mozart program. The soloists are Jeffrey Kahane, piano, and Stephen Taylor, oboe. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 17, at 5:30: Vladimir Feltsman, piano. (Katonah, N.Y. Through Sunday, Aug. 21. Trains leaving Grand Central Terminal on Saturdays at 2:48 and 5:48, and on Sundays at 3:48, are met at Katonah by buses for Caramoor. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-5035.)

Waterloo Festival Orchestra—This week's program is conducted by Maxim Shostakovich, with Dmitri Sitkovetsky, violin. The season of weekly concerts runs through Saturday, July 23. (Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J. 1-201 347-4700. Saturday, July 16, at 8:30.)

Tanglewood—The summer residence of the Boston Symphony. Thursday, July 14, at 8:30: Emanuel Ax, piano, with Peter Serkin. . . . ¶ Friday, July 15, at 9: Charles Dutoit conducting the orchestra, with Shlomo Mintz, violin. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 16, at 8:30: Roger Norrington conducting the orchestra, with Harold Wright, clarinet. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 17, at 2:30: Charles Dutoit conducting the orchestra, with Louis Lortie, piano. (Lenox, Mass. Through Sunday, Aug. 28. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—Through Saturday, July 16: The American Ballroom Theatre. . . . ¶ Tuesday through Saturday, July 19-23: The Hubbard Street Dance Company. (Becket, Mass. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8:30; and Saturdays at 2 and 8:30. Through Saturday, Aug. 27. For information about tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

Saratoga Performing Arts Center—Performances by the **NEW YORK CITY BALLET** of a three-week season that will run through Saturday, July 23. Tuesday evening, July 12: "Glass Pieces," "Ives, Songs," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, July 13: "The Bounding Line," "The Waltz Project," and "Space." . . . ¶ Thursday matinée, July 14: "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," "Sonatas and Interludes," "Tarantella," and "Who Cares?" . . . ¶ Thursday evening, July 14: "Interplay," "Ives, Songs," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Friday, July 15 (a benefit program): "The Chairman Dances," "Sophisticated Lady," "Rhapsody in Blue," and "Western Symphony." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, July 16: "Tea-Rose," "Western Symphony," and "Space." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, July 16: "Interplay," "Ives, Songs," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, July 19: "Black & White," "Behind the China Dogs," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Wednesday, July 20: "Five," "Fancy Free," "Sonatas and Interludes," and "Rhapsody in Blue." (Saratoga Springs. Evenings at 8:15. Matinées at 2. For information about tickets, call 1-518 587-3330.)

ET ALIA

Democratic National Convention—Opens at Atlanta's Omni Coliseum on Monday, July 18, at 5 P.M. The keynote address, by Texas State Treasurer Ann Richards, will be delivered later that evening. The convention continues through Thursday, July 21.

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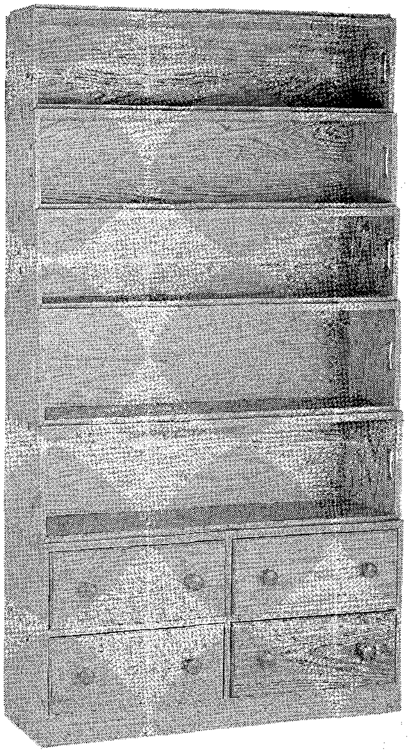

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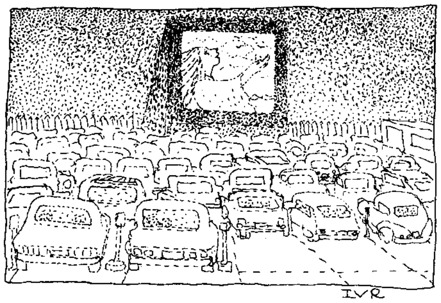
THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 12.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
(Separate admissions) "Loose Connections" (directed by Richard Eyre); "A Day on the Grand Canal with the Emperor of China" (Philip Haas) and "A Bigger Splash" (1984; Jack Hazan), both with David Hockney; and "Joan of the Angels?" (1962; Jerzy Kawalerowicz; in Polish).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 2: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 3: "License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Big Business" (†).

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Through July 14: "Bull Durham" (†).
From July 15: To be announced.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Willow" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Presidio" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through July 14: "Moonstruck" (†).
From July 15: "Bambi" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through July 12: "Beethoven's Nephew" (Paul Morrissey).
From July 13: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Big" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through July 14: "Phantasm II" (Don Coscarelli). From July 15: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through July 14: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan. From July 15: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"The Kitchen Toto" (Harry Hook).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through July 14: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi. From July 15: "Die Hard" (John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, and Alexander Godunov.
Theatre 2: "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "A World Apart" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 2: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Bull Durham" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Presidio" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
Through July 14: "Willow" (†).
From July 15: "A Fish Called Wanda" (Charles Crichton), with John Cleese, Jamie Lee Curtis, Kevin Kline, and Michael Palin.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: Through July 12: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi. From July 13: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 14: "Big Business" (†). From July 15: (Matinées only) "Bambi" (†); and (evenings only) "Big Business" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through July 12: "Beirut: The Last Home Movie" (1987; directed by Jennifer Fox), a documentary. July 13-19: "The Love Suicides at Sonezaki" (1981; Midori Kurisaki; in Japanese). From July 20: "God Doesn't Believe in Us Anymore" (1981; Axel Corti; in German); and "Santa Fe" (1985; Axel Corti; in German).
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "A Taxing Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 14: "Tampopo" (†). From July 15: To be announced.

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through July 14: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan. From July 15: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"Hairspray" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Manchurian Candidate" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Kitchen Toto" (Harry Hook).
Theatre 3: "Candy Mountain" (†).
Theatre 4: "Aria," ten episodes by ten directors; and "Light Years" (René Laloux).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through July 14: "Phantasm II" (Don Coscarelli). From July 15: (Matinées only) "Bambi" (†); and (evenings only) "Phantasm II."
Theatre 2: Through July 12: "Big" (†). From July 13: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.
Theatre 3: "Bull Durham" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through July 14: "Willow" (†).
From July 15: "Bambi" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Au Revoir les Enfants" ("Goodbye, Children") (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Shy People" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jill Clayburgh and Barbara Hershey.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"White Mischief" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"The Last Emperor" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"A Handful of Dust" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
Through July 14: "The Manchurian Candidate" (†).
From July 15: To be announced.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
Through July 14: "Willow" (†).
From July 15: "A Fish Called Wanda" (Charles Crichton), with John Cleese, Jamie Lee Curtis, Kevin Kline, and Michael Palin.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Commissar" (1967; Alexander Askoldov; in Russian).
Theatre 2: "Bagdad Café" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 14: "A Taxing Woman" (†). From July 15: "Boyfriends and Girlfriends" ("L'Ami de Mon Amie;" Eric Rohmer; in French).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Babette's Feast" (†).
Theatre 2: "Wings of Desire" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through July 12: "License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.
From July 13: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 3: "Bull Durham" (†).
Theatre 4: "Coming to America."
Theatre 5: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 6: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through July 14: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan. From July 15: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through July 14: "The Presidio" (†). From July 15: (Matinées only) "Bambi" (†); and (evenings only) to be announced.

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (316-6660)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Phantasm II" (Don Coscarelli).
Theatre 2: Through July 12: "The Great Outdoors" (Howard Deutch), with Dan Aykroyd and John Candy. From July 13: "License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (directed by Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.
Theatre 2: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 3: "Rambo III" (Peter Macdonald), with Sylvester Stallone and Richard Crenna.
Theatre 4: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 5: Through July 14: "Short Circuit 2." From July 15: "Die Hard" (John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, and Alexander Godunov.
Theatre 6: "Bull Durham" (†).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Big Business" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "The Presidio" (†).
Theatre 3: Through July 14: "The Presidio" (†). From July 15: "Bambi" (†).
Theatre 4: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Phantasm II" (Don Coscarelli).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through July 12: "Funny Farm" (George Roy Hill), with Chevy Chase. From July 13: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.
Theatre 2: Through July 14: "Big" (†). From July 15: To be announced.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"License to Drive" (Greg Beeman), with Corey Haim and Corey Feldman.

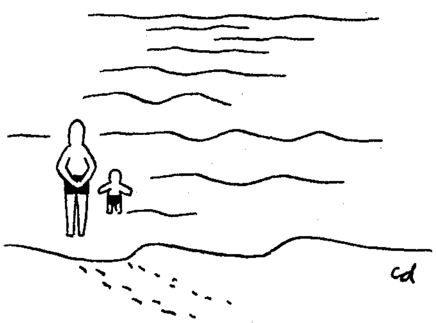
REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
July 11: "Seconds" (1966; directed by John Frankenheimer), with Rock Hudson, Salome Jens, and John Randolph; and "Psycho" (1960; Alfred Hitchcock), with Anthony Perkins, Vera Miles, John Gavin, and Janet Leigh.
July 12-13: "The Ten Commandments" (1956; Cecil B. De Mille), with Charlton Heston and Yul Brynner.
July 14-16: "A Place in the Sun" (†); and "Carrie" (1952; William Wyler), with Jennifer Jones, Laurence Olivier, Miriam Hopkins, and Eddie Albert.
July 17-18: "Terms of Endearment" (1983; James L. Brooks), with Debra Winger, Shirley MacLaine, and Jack Nicholson; and "Ordinary People" (†).
July 19-20: "The Spy Who Came In from the Cold" (1965; Martin Ritt), with Richard Burton and Claire Bloom; and "Seven Days in May" (1964; John Frankenheimer), with Burt Lancaster, Kirk Douglas, Fredric March, and Ava Gardner.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through July 12: Two different programs of Warner Brothers cartoons, one featuring Porky Pig.
July 13-14: "School Daze" (1988; Spike Lee); and "She's Gotta Have It" (1986; Spike Lee), with Tracy Camila Johns, Tommy Redmond Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee.
July 15-16: "The Berlin Affair" (1987; Liliana Cavani); and "The Night Porter" (1974; Liliana Cavani), with Dirk Bogarde and Charlotte Rampling.
July 17: "Diabolique" (1955; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse; and "The Wages of Fear" (1953; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Yves Montand, Charles Vanel, Folco Lulli, and Peter Van Eyck.
July 18-19: Two different programs of Warner Brothers cartoons—one featuring Bugs Bunny and the other Daffy Duck.
From July 20: "Baby Doll" (1956; Elia Kazan), with Karl Malden, Carroll Baker, Eli Wallach, Mildred Dunnock, and Lonny Chapman; and "On the Waterfront" (1954; Elia Kazan), with Marlon Brando, Lee J. Cobb, Eva Marie Saint, Karl Malden, and Rod Steiger.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
July 11: "Blackmail" (1929; Alfred Hitchcock), with Anny Ondra, Cyril Ritchard, and Sara Allgood; "Champagne" (1928; Alfred Hitchcock; a silent film), with Betty Balfour and Gordon Harker; and "Lazybones" (1935; Michael Powell).
July 12: "I Know Where I'm Going" (1945; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Wendy Hiller and Roger Livesey; and "One of Our Aircraft Is Missing" (1942; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Godfrey Tearle.
July 13-14: "Peeping Tom" (1960; Michael Powell), with Karl Boehm and Moira Shearer; and "Small Back Room" (1952; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with David Farrar.
July 15-16: "Black Narcissus" (1947; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Deborah Kerr, Sabu, David Farrar, and Flora Robson; and "Stairway to Heaven" (1946; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with David Niven, Kim Hunter, and Roger Livesey.
July 17: "The Red Shoes" (1948; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Moira Shearer and Léonide Massine.
July 18: "49th Parallel" (1941; Michael Powell), with Laurence Olivier, Leslie Howard, and Raymond Massey; and "Spy in Black" (1939; Michael Powell), with Conrad Veidt and Valerie Hobson.
July 19: "The Thief of Bagdad" (1940 †); and "The Elusive Pimpernel" (1950; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with David Niven.
From July 20: "A Canterbury Tale" (1944; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger); and "The Wild Heart" (1952; Michael Powell), with Jennifer Jones, David Farrar, and Cyril Cusack.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
July 11: "Cammina Cammina" (1983; Ermanno Olmi; in Italian); and "Flowers of St. Francis" (1949; Roberto Rossellini; in Italian), with Aldo Fabrizi.
July 12: "To Be or Not to Be" (1942; Ernst Lubitsch), with Carole Lombard, Jack Benny, Robert Stack, and Felix Bressart; and "Trouble in Paradise" (1932; Ernst Lubitsch), with Kay Francis, Herbert Marshall, Miriam Hopkins, and Edward Everett Horton.
July 13: "Zelly and Me" (1988; Tina Rathborne), with Isabella Rossellini; and "The Fallen Idol" (1948; Carol Reed), with Bobby Henrey, Ralph Richardson, and Michèle Morgan.
July 14: "The Last Picture Show" (1971; Peter Bogdanovich), with Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson, and Cloris Leachman; and "Directed by John Ford" (1971; Peter Bogdanovich), a documentary.
July 15-16: "Full Metal Jacket" (1987; Stanley Kubrick), with Matthew Modine; and "Paths of Glory" (1957; Stanley Kubrick), with Kirk Douglas.
July 17: "The Witches" (1969; Luchino Visconti, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Mauro Bolognini, Franco Rossi, and Vittorio De Sica; in Italian), with Silvana Mangano; and "Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow" (1964; Vittorio De Sica; in Italian), with Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni.



July 18: "Paris, Texas" (1984; Wim Wenders), with Harry Dean Stanton, Nastassja Kinski, and Dean Stockwell; and "The Searchers" (1956; John Ford), with John Wayne, Natalie Wood, Jeffrey Hunter, Vera Miles, and Ward Bond.
July 19: "Vice Versa" (1947; Peter Ustinov); and "Arthur" (†).
July 20: "Suddenly" (1954; Lewis Allen), with Frank Sinatra, Sterling Hayden, and James Gleason; and "The Parallax View" (1974; Alan J. Pakula), with Warren Beatty, Paula Prentiss, and Hume Cronyn.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
July 11: "Carnival in Flanders" (1936; Jacques Feyder; in French), with Louis Jouvet; and "Toni" (1935; Jean Renoir; in French).
July 12: "Separate Tables" (1958; Delbert Mann), with Rita Hayworth, Deborah Kerr, David Niven, Burt Lancaster, and Wendy Hiller; and "Brief Encounter" (1946; David Lean), with Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard.
July 13: "The Heiress" (1949; William Wyler), with Olivia de Havilland, Montgomery Clift, and Ralph Richardson; and "A Place in the Sun" (†).
July 14: "Meet Me in St. Louis" (1944; Vincente Minnelli), with Judy Garland and Margaret O'Brien; and "The Band Wagon" (1953; Vincente Minnelli), with Fred Astaire, Cyd Charisse, and Nanette Fabray.
July 15-16: "You Can't Take It with You" (1938; Frank Capra), with Jean Arthur, James Stewart, Lionel Barrymore, and Edward Arnold; and "The Awful Truth" (†).
July 17: "One Night of Love" (1934; Victor Schertzinger), with Grace Moore; and "New Moon" (1930; John Conway), with Grace Moore and Lawrence Tibbett.
July 18: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (†); and "Muriel" (1963; Alain Resnais; in French), with Delphine Seyrig.
July 19: "Her Man" (1930; Tay Garnett), with Helen Twelvetrees, Ricardo Cortez, Marjorie Rambeau, and Thelma Todd; and "The Woman I Stole" (1933; Irving Cummings), with Fay Wray and Jack Holt.
July 20: "In a Lonely Place" (†) and "Dead Reckoning" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre I: July 12 at 6: "Becky Sharp" (1935; directed by Rouben Mamoulian), with Miriam Hopkins, Cedric Hardwicke, and Frances Dee. . . . ¶ July 14 at 2:30: "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon" (1949; John Ford), with John Wayne, Joanne Dru, and John Agar. . . . ¶ July 14 at 6: "Rio Grande" (1950; John Ford), with John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara, and Ben Johnson. . . . ¶ July 15 at 2:30: "The Bat Whispers" (1930; Roland West), with Chester Morris, Una Merkel, and Maude Eburne. . . . ¶ July 15 at 6: "One Hour with You" (1932; Ernst Lubitsch and George Cukor), with Maurice Chevalier, Jeanette MacDonald, and Genevieve Tobin. . . . ¶ July 16 at 2: "Pitfall" (1948; André de Toth), with Dick Powell, Lizabeth Scott, and Raymond Burr. . . . ¶ July 16 at 5: "Ramrod" (1947; André de Toth), with Veronica Lake, Joel McCrea, and Arleen Whelan. . . . ¶ July 17 at 2: "Little Women" (1933; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, Joan Bennett, and Edna May Oliver. . . . ¶ July 17 at 5: "Doctor X" (1932; Michael Curtiz), with Lionel Atwill, Fay Wray, and Preston Foster. . . . ¶ July 18 at 6: "The Gay Desperado" (1936; Rouben Mamoulian), with Nino Martini, Ida Lupino, and Leo Carillo. . . . ¶ July 19 at 6: "Doctor X."

Theatre 2: July 11 at 2:30: "The Hearst Metrotone Newsreel Collection: Preserved Footage, 1919-40." . . . ¶ July 11 at 6: "The Toll of the Sea" (1922; Chester Franklin; a silent film), with Anna May Wong and Kenneth Harlan; and other examples of early color-film processes. . . . ¶ July 12 at 2:30 and July 18 at 2:30: Paper prints, films set in New York. . . . ¶ July 19 at

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

2:30: "The Hearst Metrotone Newsreel Collection: Preserved Footage, 1919-40."

French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—July 13 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Marius" (1931; Alexander Korda; in French, with English subtitles), with Pierre Fresnay, Raimu, Alida Rouffe, Orane Démazis, and Fernand Charpin. . . . ¶ July 20 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Fanny" (1932; Marc Allégret; in French, with English subtitles), with Orane Démazis, Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, Alida Rouffe, and Fernand Charpin.

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—July 14 at 8: "Broken Blossoms" (1919; D. W. Griffith; a silent film), with Lillian Gish. Original organ score written and played by Lee Erwin.

Murder, Mystery and Mayhem—A series of films set in New York City during the thirties, forties, and fifties. July 17 at 2: "Angels with Dirty Faces" (1938; Michael Curtiz), with James Cagney, Pat O'Brien, Humphrey Bogart, Ann Sheridan, and the Dead End Kids. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. 873-3400.)

Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. (82nd St. entrance on Tuesdays) (570-3949)—July 12: "The Petrified Forest" (1936; Archie Mayo), with Leslie Howard, Bette Davis, and Humphrey Bogart. . . . ¶ July 13: "The Big Carnival" ("Ace in the Hole;" 1951; Billy Wilder), with Kirk Douglas and Jan Sterling. . . . ¶ July 14: "Pride of the Yankees" (1942; Sam Wood), with Gary Cooper, Teresa Wright, Babe Ruth, Walter Brennan, and Dan Duryea. . . . ¶ July 19: "Jezebel" (1938; William Wyler), with Bette Davis, Henry Fonda, George Brent, Margaret Lindsay, and Fay Bainter. . . . ¶ July 20: "Some Like It Hot" (1959; Billy Wilder), with Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis, Marilyn Monroe, Joe E. Brown, George Raft, and Pat O'Brien. (All showings at 8. Tickets available one hour before performance time on the night of the performance.)

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—Starting July 12, "Woody Allen: The Television Work," featuring Allen's 1969 one-hour television special and a thirty-minute compilation of sketches he did between 1958 and 1967. Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays at 12:05, 1:45, and 3:30, with additional showings on Thursday, July 14, at 5:15 and 7. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

Arthur (1981)—As Hobson, the valet to a drunken millionaire playboy, John Gielgud may be the most poised and confident funnyman you'll ever see. And as the top-hatted lush, Arthur, Dudley Moore has a mad sparkle in his eyes. There's always something bubbling inside Arthur—the booze just adds to his natural fizz. This was the only film directed by the late Steve Gordon (he also wrote the script); he was a long way from being able to do with images what he could do with words, but there are some inspired bits and his work has a friendly spirit. As the poor-girl heroine, Liza Minnelli doesn't have her share of the good lines and she's electrifying when she only needs to be charming; as the playboy's grandmother, Geraldine Fitzgerald has the worst scenes and the zest she gives them goes peculiarly wrong. With Barney Martin, Anne De Salvo, and Jill Eikenberry. (Thalia SoHo; July 19.)

Au Revoir les Enfants (Goodbye, Children)—It's set in Occupied France in 1944, when the writer-director Louis Malle was an eleven-year-old at a Catholic boys' boarding school near Fontainebleau that sheltered several Jewish boys. The Gestapo learned they were there, and sent the ones they found to Auschwitz, and the headmaster to a work camp. One of the Jewish boys was in Malle's class, but Malle didn't get to know him well and didn't realize that he was Jewish. For the dramatic purposes of the movie, he has conceived a close friendship between his alter ego, the fair-haired Julien Quentin (Gaspard Manesse), and the dark boy who is using the false name Jean Bonnet (Raphaël Fejtö). But nothing comes into clear focus—not the boys' attitudes, not even the images. The film (especially the first half) seems padded, formal, discreet. It's like watching a faded French classic. And there's something unseemly about the way Jean is used as an aesthetic object—spiritual, sensitive, exotic. With Francine Racette as Julien's mother and François Négret as the informer. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/22/88.) (Festival.)

The Awful Truth (1937)—A classic screwball comedy about one of old Hollywood's favorite subjects: the divorced couple who almost bed down with new mates but get back together. Irene Dunne and Cary Grant are the sparring partners, and Ralph Bellamy plays just about the same role he later played in "His Girl Friday." Irene Dunne's way with a quip is to smile brightly and wring it dry, but she's in top form here. The cast includes Joyce Compton, Esther Dale, Cecil Cunningham, and Alex D'Arcy. Leo McCarey's direction is first-rate. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 15-16.)

Babette's Feast—In a village on Denmark's gray, blustery Jutland peninsula, sometime in the eighteen-eighties, Babette (Stéphane Audran), the French servant of a pair of elderly unmarried sisters (Birgitte Federspiel and Bodil Kjer), prepares a special dinner for her employers and their guests—a lavish, one-time-only orgy of haute cuisine served to a group of devout Lutherans who are used to receiving the Lord's bounty in the form of grim little slabs of boiled fish. Adapting one of Isak Dinesen's "Anecdotes of Destiny," Gabriel Axel, the writer-director, tells this simple tale simply. He establishes a lulling, bedtime-story tone right from the start, perhaps too successfully: our eyelids begin to seem very heavy after twenty minutes or so. The whole thing turns out to be about the consolations of art, and the union of "righteousness and bliss." The film is more righteous than blissful: a more austere celebration of the pleasures of the senses would be difficult to imagine. In Danish and French. —T.R. (Cinema Studio.)

Bagdad Café—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks into a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon (whose 1985 "Sugarbaby" was also a vehicle for Sägebrecht), is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings the outcast characters together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty (Jasmin does magic tricks). The American performers are trapped in a movie that treats them as merely exotic—waxwork grotesques waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay. With CCH Pounder, Jack Palance, and Christine Kaufmann.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Bambi (1942)—None of the animals in this animated Disney feature has a gooier gaze than the little fawn, Bambi, who is still dependent on his mother. The mother-child relationship is so tender and close that when the mother is killed by hunters small children in the audience frequently scream and cry. It all ends happily when Bambi, grown to staghood, marries the virginally sweet doe Faline. The picture is a classic of sorts, if only for the uncannily awful sound of the young woodland creatures in conversation; when puberty sets in and these voices suddenly change, Walt Disney begins to seem as berserk as Busby Berkeley. Still, there's no denying that for many people some of the sequences (such as Bambi's birth) have an enduring primal power. From the Felix Salten novel. (Eastside Cinema, Guild, and Embassy; starting July 15. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Metro Cinema; starting July 15, matinées only.)

Big—A formula fantasy film that has been directed very gently and tactfully by Penny Marshall; she sleepwalks you through the script (by Gary Ross and Anne Spielberg) about a twelve-year-old boy who wishes he were big and is magically given the body of a man in his thirties—Tom Hanks. There are neat, flaky moments, but everything has a tepid inevitability, and even as you smile you may be groaning inwardly, because "Big" is dedicated to awakening the child in all of us. Of course, the Hanks character isn't ready to function as an adult; he wants to go back. The movie wants to go back, too. It's nostalgic for childhood, for suburbia, for innocent fun. (It isn't about kids wanting to be big; it's about grownups feeling little.) In its wholesome way, "Big" is selling the slick wonders of immaturity. With the slyly sexy Elizabeth Perkins, and good comic work by Robert Loggia and Jared Rushton. Also with John Heard, David Moscow, Jon Lovitz, and Mercedes Ruehl. (6/27/88) (Gotham Cinema, 86th Street East Twin, Art Greenwich Twin, and Embassy 72nd St. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex; through July 12. . . . ¶ National Twin; through July 14.)

Big Business—Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin, in a farce about two sets of identical twins accidently mismatched at birth. They're the Ratliffs, who live in a backwoods Southern town, and they're the Sheltons, who run the New York conglomerate Moramax. The four women and their various courtiers, flunkies, and love objects wind up spending the weekend at the Plaza Hotel. The film often looks third class, and the director, Jim Abrahams, doesn't have the knack of making the details click into place. Yet the picture moves along, spattering the air with throwaway gags, and a minute after something misfires you're laughing out loud. Fred Ward, who plays Tomlin's down-home suitor, is serenely unself-conscious, and takes over as the film's hero. Midler breezes through, kicking one gong after another. She's pure appetite. And as the mogul of Moramax she flips up her collar and her gesture bespeaks perfect self-satisfaction. (Chaplin did this sort of thing, and he didn't do it better.) With Leo Burmester as the bum. Script credited to Dori Pierson and Marc Rubel. (6/27/88) (Bay Cinema, Cinema II, Waverly, Embassy 72nd St., and Embassy 1. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin. Evening performances only starting July 15.)

Bull Durham—Written and directed by Ron Shelton, this sunny romantic comedy has the kind of dizzying off-center literacy that Preston Sturges' pictures had. It's a satirical celebration of our native jauntiness and wit; it takes us into a subculture that's like a bawdy adjunct of childhood—minor-league baseball. Kevin Costner plays the smart, hyper-articulate catcher Crash, and comes through with his first wide-awake, star performance; at his best, he's as berserkly ironic as Jack Nicholson is at some of his peaks. After playing for twelve years, Crash arrives in Durham, North Carolina, to join the Durham Bulls and learns that he's been brought in to train baby-faced Nuke (Tim Robbins), a wild young rookie pitcher who is destined to move up. Susan Sarandon plays the beautiful, passionate Annie Savoy, a baseball fanatic who has her own scorecard: "There's never been a ballplayer slept with me who didn't have the best year of his career." What you keep reacting to is the film's exuberant doodles. (6/27/88) (Loews New York Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Murray Hill; through July 14.)

Candy Mountain—Rudy Wurlitzer wrote the screenplay of this low-budget road movie and directed it in collaboration with Robert Frank. It's the story of a dim, unsuccessful young New York musician (Kevin J. O'Connor) who makes a deal with a rock star (David Johansen) and a couple of guys in business suits to track down a brilliant guitar-maker named Elmore Silk (Harris Yulin), who disappeared from the scene years ago. On his journey through upstate New York and eastern Canada, the eager punk loses a couple of cars, spends all his money, gets arrested, trades observations on the romance of the road and the meaning of life with an assortment of oddballs, losers, freaks, and geezers, and eventually finds the great man holed up in a town in Nova Scotia, where the whole eventful quest turns out to be—surprise—sort of meaningless. This may sound dreary, and it's certainly thin, but the movie has a surprisingly genial spirit. Frank, a great photographer ("The Americans") who has also made several 16-mm. films, knows how to shoot the seedy roadside landscape so that we don't feel oppressed by the bleakness of it all. The lively cast includes an eclectic bunch of musicians: Tom Waits, Leon Redbone, Dr. John, and Rita MacNeil.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

Dead Reckoning (1947)—A forgettable Bogart melodrama that was already familiar when it came out; it had been synthesized from several of his hits, with Lizabeth Scott's role processed out of Mary Astor and Lauren Bacall routines. Scott double-crosses a friend of Bogart's, and as he takes her to the authorities he snarls, "You're going to fry." "Ah," she says yearningly, flaring her nostrils, "can't we put this behind us? Don't you love me?" He sneers heavily, though you can see that deep down under he loves her. She fries. John Cromwell directed; with Morris Carnovsky, Wallace Ford, and William Prince. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 20.)

Hairspray—The writer-director John Waters treats the message movie as a genre to be parodied, just like the teenpic. Combining the two, he comes up with a pop dadaist musical comedy, set in Baltimore in 1962. Waters loves narrative, and he has half a dozen plots crisscrossing each other. In the middle are the spherical Mrs. Edna Turnblad (played by the male actor Divine) and her baby-blimp daughter, Tracy (Ricki Lake); they wear matching mother-and-daughter outfits. Tracy, who's the newest teen-age dancer on "The Corny Collins Show," discovers that black kids aren't allowed to take part and she becomes a leader in the fight for integration. Meanwhile, Divine watches over Tracy and preens like a mother hen. There's a what-the-hell quality to Divine's acting which the film needs; it would be too close to a real teenpic without it. When Divine's Edna Turnblad is onscreen in the sleeveless dresses she's partial to, the movie has something like the lunacy of a W. C. Fields in drag. With Ruth Brown, Debbie Harry, Sonny Bono, Jerry Stiller, Shawn Thompson, Ric Ocasek, Pia Zadora, Jo Ann Havrilla, and Waters himself as a sicko psychiatrist. (3/7/88) (8th St. Playhouse.)

A Handful of Dust—The filmmakers who have brought Evelyn Waugh's sharp, satiric 1934 novel to the screen treat it as if it were one of the writer's ponderous later works—as if it were "Brideshead Revisited." In fact, the producer, Derek Granger, and the director, Charles Sturridge, were also responsible for the plodding TV miniseries of "Brideshead" several years ago. The cinematography is creamy and pictorial, the sets and costumes are opulent, the mood is helplessly nostalgic, and many of the actors seem to believe that they're playing fully rounded human beings rather than merciless caricatures. Waugh's novel traces the decline of Tony Last, a naïve English landowner, husband, and father who is betrayed by everything and everyone he believes in—especially by his charming, shallow wife, Brenda. As always in Waugh, people say and do beastly things to each other, someone dies, and English society, superficial and infinitely adaptable, rolls on. Although virtually all the dialogue is lifted directly from the novel, the polished cruelty rarely sounds witty. The filmmakers give the appearance of being perfectly faithful to the novel, but they're constantly betraying it. In the last half hour, though, we're treated to a brilliant performance by Alec Guinness, as the alarming Mr. Todd. Playing Tony's final betrayer, he hits the tiny notes of menace and ruthless self-interest in the lulling tones of polite English discourse: his sly, precise effects are an actor's equivalent of Waugh's sneakily devastating prose. With James Wilby (as Tony), Kristin Scott Thomas (as Brenda), Judi Dench, Rupert Graves, and Anjelica Huston. Screenplay by Granger, Sturridge, and Tim Sullivan.—T.R. (7/11/88) (Paris.)

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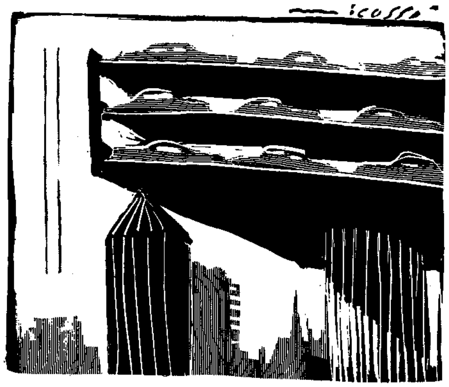
Hiroshima, Mon Amour (1959)—Hushed and hypnotic, it makes you so conscious of its artistry that you may feel as if you're in church and need to giggle. This first full-length film by Alain Resnais has a script by Marguerite Duras that features musical, incantatory dialogue, and a crucial line, "They make movies to sell soap, why not a movie to sell peace?" The movie, which opens with the intertwined nude bodies of a French movie actress (Emmanuèle Riva) and a Japanese architect (Eiji Okada), was taken as powerful propaganda against the atom bomb. The lovers are covered in symbolic ash, and when the woman says that she has seen everything in Hiroshima the man tells her she has seen nothing in Hiroshima; then they say the same things over again, and again, and perhaps again. This is a woman's picture in the most derogatory sense of the term, but with a high-cultural tone. Riva gives a remarkably fine performance. Eiji Okada says no more than an analyst might; he is simply a sounding board. And if, being Japanese, he is supposed to represent the world's conscience, he brings an unsuitably bland, professionally sympathetic, and upper-class manner to the function. The images of the two in bed are intercut with what is supposed to be documentary footage of the effect of the bomb on Hiroshima, but some of the footage is from a fictional atrocity movie. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 18.)

In a Lonely Place (1950)—Humphrey Bogart, as a cynical, tired Hollywood screenwriter named Dixon Steele, in an atmospheric but disappointingly hollow murder melodrama directed by Nicholas Ray. In talking to a hatcheck girl, Steele discovers that she has read the book he is supposed to adapt to the screen; not wanting the bother of reading it himself, he invites her to his place so he can grill her about it. When the girl is murdered, the police think he did it. Ray doesn't seem to have an adequate budget or enough ideas to play with; the dialogue is no more than functional, and there's not much of a supporting cast—Gloria Grahame, Frank Lovejoy, and Carl Benton Reid. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 20.)

The Last Emperor—Bernardo Bertolucci tells the story of Pu Yi, who was not quite three when, in 1908, he was set on the Dragon Throne in Peking's Forbidden City and became the titular ruler of a third of the people on earth. After being deposed and then enthroned again in Japanese-occupied Manchuria, he was in Soviet custody for five years, and then spent ten years being "reëducated" in a Chinese war-criminals prison. The movie doesn't have the juicy absurdity that seems to pour right out of the historical story. And it suppresses the drama. But it has pictorial grace and a dull fascination. Bertolucci presents Pu Yi (John Lone) as a man without will or backbone who lives his life as spectacle—who watches his life go by. And so we're given a historical pageant without a protagonist. There's an idea here, but it's a dippy idea—it results in a passive movie. With Joan Chen and Peter O'Toole. Cinematography by Vittorio Storaro; the film shows the palaces and courtyards of the two-hundred-and-fifty-acre Forbidden City. 2 hours and 46 minutes. (11/30/87) (Carnegie Screening Room.)



The Manchurian Candidate (1962)—A daring, funny, and far-out thriller about political extremists. George Axelrod adapted the Richard Condon novel, and John Frankenheimer came to life as a director. This picture may be the most sophisticated political satire ever made in Hollywood. With Angela Lansbury, Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, and James Gregory. (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Cinema 3; through July 14.)

Moonstruck—A rose-tinted black comedy, with its own special lushness. Cher is devastatingly funny and sinuous and beautiful as a widowed bookkeeper who lives with her Italian-American family in a big old brownstone in Brooklyn. When the bookkeeper and her fiancé's brother, a baker (Nicolas Cage), start lusting for one another, a fairy-tale full moon lights up the movie. And when you see that the whole cast of family members are involved in libidinal confusions the opera-buffa structure can make you feel close to deliriously happy. Cage is a wonderful romantic clown: he can look stupefied while he smolders. And the director, Norman Jewison, working from John Patrick Shanley's script, stylizes the ethnic performances given by the husky-voiced Olympia Dukakis, the great, leering Julie Bovasso, Vincent Gardenia, Danny Aiello, John Mahoney, and Anita Gillette. The picture is slender, but it's an original: its mockery is a giddy homage to our desire for grand passion. (1/25/88) (Eastside Cinema; through July 14.)

Ordinary People (1980)—This is an academic exercise in catharsis; it's earnest, it means to improve people, and it lasts a lifetime. The story is about the Jarretts—Donald Sutherland, Mary Tyler Moore, and their son, Timothy Hutton—a Protestant family living in an imposing brick house in a wealthy suburb of Chicago. From time to time, the father, with a nervous tic of a smile, tries to make contact with his son and urges him to see the psychiatrist recommended by the hospital where he was treated after a recent suicide attempt. The movie is about the harm that repression can do, but the movie is just as repressive and sanitized as the way of life it means to expose. Making his début as a film director, Robert Redford shows talent with the actors, the younger ones especially. The joker about this movie is that the audience weeps for the unloving Wasp-witch mother, who cares only for appearances and who can't change because of the pride and the privacy she was trained in. With Judd Hirsch as the idealized warm, friendly Jewish psychiatrist, and Elizabeth McGovern and Meg Mundy. (Biograph Cinema; July 17-18.)

A Place in the Sun (1951)—This George Stevens version of Dreiser's "An American Tragedy," updated to the fifties, features Elizabeth Taylor—in one of her most sensitive (yet steamy) performances—as the rich girl whom a poor, rather weak young man (Montgomery Clift) is drawn to. The film is mannered enough for a gothic murder mystery, while its sleek capitalists and oppressed workers seem to come out of a Depression cartoon. The hero's jilted working-class girlfriend is not allowed even to be attractive. Shelley Winters makes the victim so horrifyingly, naggingly pathetic that when Clift thinks of killing her he hardly seems to be contemplating a crime; it's more like euthanasia. But whatever one's reservations about this famous film, it *is* impressive, and in the love scene between Taylor and Clift physical desire seems palpable. With Raymond Burr, Fred Clark, Keefe Brasselle, Shepperd Strudwick, and Ted de Corsia. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 13. . . . ¶ Biograph Cinema; July 14-16.)

The Presidio—This loud, lame thriller is set in San Francisco, in and around the Presidio Army base. An M.P. is killed when she stumbles onto a break-in at the Officers' Club, and the murder investigation turns into a clash of

IN BRIEF–Cont'd

wills between a rigid lieutenant colonel (Sean Connery) and an impetuous young homicide cop (Mark Harmon). As if that weren't drama enough, Harmon, we learn, was once an M.P. under Connery's command (they hated each other), and in the course of the movie he falls in love with the lieutenant colonel's wild and adorable daughter (Meg Ryan). The screenwriter, Larry Ferguson, and the director, Peter Hyams, obviously think that it's been far too long since we've seen cars bouncing through the streets of San Francisco at high speeds, or a testy relationship between a by-the-book old-timer and a hotheaded younger man resolving itself in grudging admiration. They're wrong. Also with Jack Warden and Mark Blum.—T.R. (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Metro Cinema; through July 14.)

Tampopo (1986)—With Nobuko Miyamoto and Tsutomu Yamazaki, directed by Juzo Itami. *In Japanese. (6/1/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema;* through July 14.)

A Taxing Woman—The third film written and directed by Juzo Itami is his first dull one. It's a comedy about tax evasion, pitting a dishonest and very clever businessman (Tsutomu Yamazaki) against the awesome forces of Japan's national tax office, whose relentless spirit is most purely incarnated in a tiny, dogged female inspector named Mrs. Itakura (Nobuko Miyamoto). This sounds like fun, but, despite some clever notions and a handful of inventive scenes, the movie feels tentative, not fully worked out; it's as if Itami got bogged down in research and forgot about the jokes. For whatever reason, "A Taxing Woman" is much more conventional than the director's previous films, "The Funeral" and "Tampopo." In Japanese.—T.R. (Bleecker St. Cinema. . . . ¶ Lincoln Plaza; through July 14.)

The Thief of Bagdad (1940)—Magical Arabian Nights adventures, on enormous, spacious sets and in brilliantly clear Maxfield Parrish colors; the screen seems to be made of velvet. Sabu is the boy thief who befriends the prince who has been blinded and has had his kingdom usurped by the evil magician, the Grand Vizier Jaffar (Conrad Veidt). The script lacks enchantment; the flashback device at the beginning is unnecessarily complicated, and the dialogue throughout is distressingly ordinary. This adds to the film's other problems—the uneven rhythms and the occasional dead spots, the stagy use of the spectacular sets. Yet considering how many directors took turns on this picture (Ludwig Berger, Michael Powell, and Tim Whelan are all credited, and Zoltán Korda and William Cameron Menzies, who are credited only as associate producers, also directed, as did Alexander Korda), it's surprising how well it holds together. With Rex Ingram, June Duprez, and Miles Malleson. (Film Forum 2; July 19.)

The Unbearable Lightness of Being—Directed by Philip Kaufman, this adaptation of Milan Kundera's novel is touching in sophisticated ways that you don't expect from an American director. A prankish sex comedy, it treats modern political events with a delicate—yet almost sly—sense of tragedy. It's the way the variations of jealousy and erotic attraction are played out by the three principal actors—an Englishman (Daniel Day-Lewis), a Swedish woman (Lena Olin), and a Frenchwoman (Juliette Binoche), all playing Czechs—that gives the movie its wonderfully unresolved texture. The story begins in Prague in 1968, during the period of freedom of expression and artistic flowering known as "socialism with a human face." Day-Lewis's Tomas is a hedonist, a womanizer, and an eminent young brain surgeon; Olin's Sabina, a painter who is his longtime sex partner, and Binoche's Tereza, whom he marries, represent the two poles of his life—lightness and weight. Kaufman has an exuberant temperament, and the spirit of the film is younger and looser than that of the book; a short two hours and fifty-three minutes, the picture has a whirling beauty. (2/8/88) (68th St. Playhouse.)

White Mischief—At first, Michael Radford's film about upper-class English settlers in Kenya in the nineteen-forties seems bracingly sardonic: there isn't a hint of the sneaky romanticism and nostalgia for Empire that colonial dramas so frequently succumb to. As one aristocratic viper after another is introduced, and each member of the large and familiar cast (Greta Scacchi, Charles Dance, Joss Ackland, Sarah Miles, John Hurt, Trevor Howard, Geraldine Chaplin) makes his distinctively peculiar entrance, the movie promises to be wicked fun. Amazingly, though, as the action gets nastier the picture gets duller. The screenplay, by Radford and Jonathan Gems, is based on the real-life murder of Josslyn Hay, Earl of Errol (Dance), a colonial Casanova who conducted a flagrant affair with young Lady Diana Broughton (Scacchi), to which their jaded social set reacted with a mixture of amusement and jealousy. As the movie concentrates more and more on the unsavory triangle of Errol, Diana, and her creepy middle-aged husband (Ackland), we begin to get the uneasy feeling that the director has lost track of his own intentions. For all the melodramatic complications, the characters remain static, as if they'd been frozen in place after their initial scenes.—T.R. (Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

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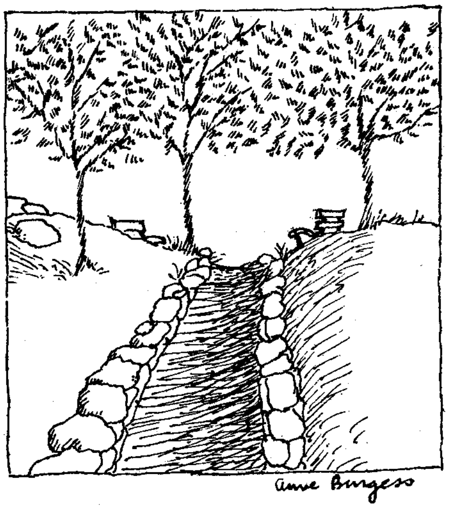
Who Framed Roger Rabbit—This manic comedy, in which animated cartoon characters interact with live actors, is an amazing feat of entertainment engineering—like a Disneyland ride or a World's Fair movie. The setting is Los Angeles in 1947, and the screenplay, by Jeffrey Price and Peter Seaman, takes off from the fairly witty conceit that the cartoon characters, called Toons here, are ordinary contract players in the already skewed universe of the Hollywood studio system. These strange creatures become involved in a conventional forties mystery plot, featuring a seedy, hard-drinking private eye played by Bob Hoskins. The director, Robert Zemeckis ("Used Cars," "Back to the Future"), and his small army of animators and special-effects artists mean to pay homage to the Hollywood animation of the thirties and forties—"Roger Rabbit" begins with an original cartoon in the style of Tex Avery and Chuck Jones—but the movie doesn't have the right spirit. Although Zemeckis does his best to keep things moving, and the effects are very well done, nothing can disguise the massive, backbreaking strain of the effort. The movie provides only the illusion of lunacy. Technology and plot mechanics labor mightily to evoke an aura of freedom and uninhibited joy—yet there's hardly a spontaneous moment in the film. This is "movie magic" at its most elaborate and most daunting: it inspires awe rather than simple delight. Also with Christopher Lloyd, Joanna Cassidy, and Stubby Kaye. The funniest Toon, Roger's sireny wife, Jessica, speaks with Kathleen Turner's (uncredited) voice and sings with Amy Irving's. The director of animation was Richard Williams. Adapted, very loosely, from the novel "Who Censored Roger Rabbit?," by Gary K. Wolf.—T.R. (7/11/88) (Gramercy, Coronet, Ziegfeld, and Columbia Cinema.)

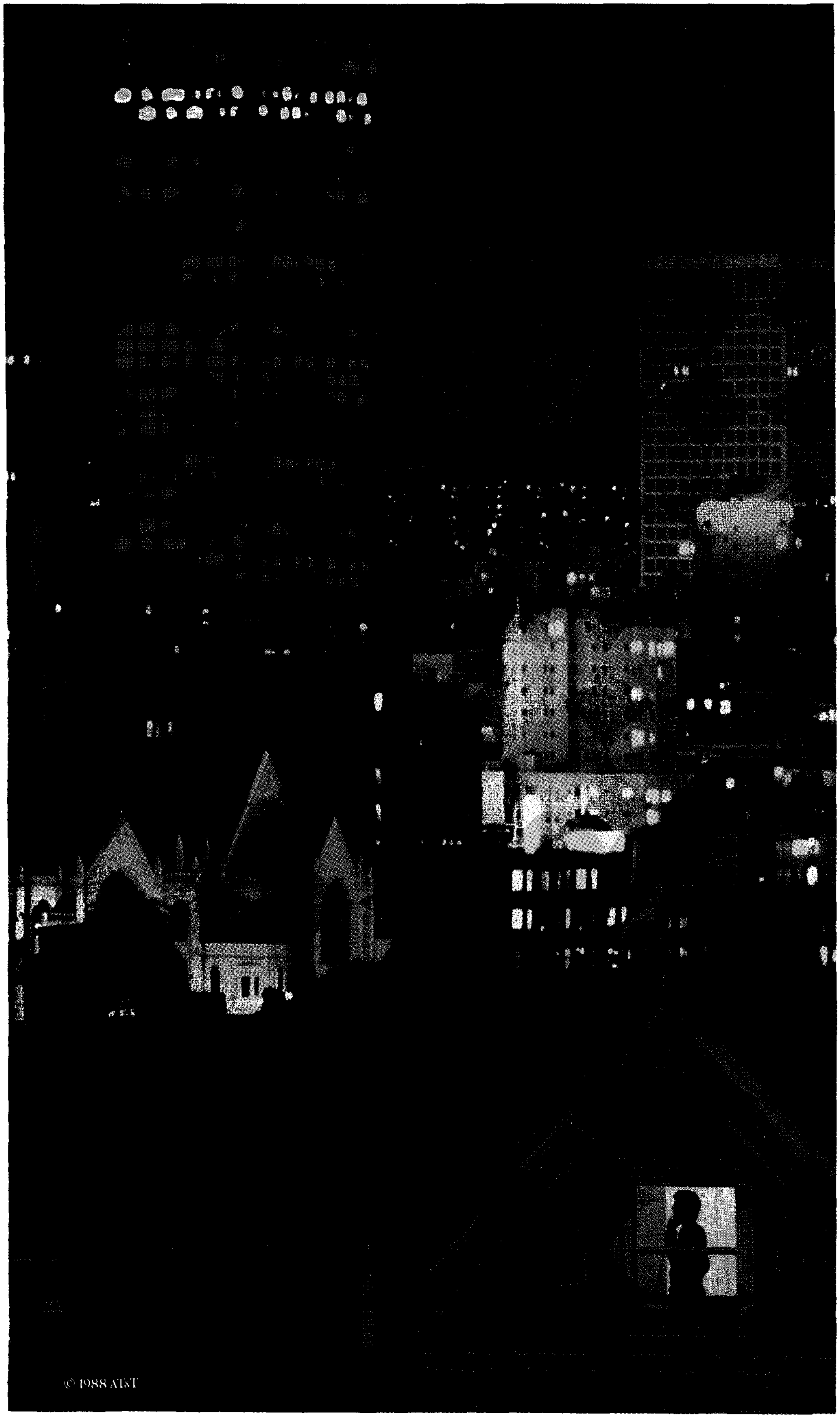


Willow—The evil sorceress Queen Bavmorda (Jean Marsh) is killing all the newborn babies in the Daikini domain, because of a prophecy that an infant born with a special mark will bring about her downfall. Placed on a raft of rushes, the savior baby girl drifts downriver into the land of a peaceful, elflike people, the Nelwyns. A young Nelwyn farmer, Willow (Warwick Davis), tries to protect her, and eventually, with the help of an outlaw Daikini swordsman (Val Kilmer) and a rebel Daikini (Gavan O'Herlihy), Willow storms the evil queen's black castle. This tale involves trolls, vicious black boars, nine-inch-tall men called Brownies, platinum-wigged Tinker Bells, a two-headed dragon, and some four hundred special-effects shots. Before it's over, you feel as if you'd fallen into a pile of mixed metaphors. Produced by George Lucas, who also wrote the story, the movie seems to be one stale idea after another. The director, Ron Howard, shows his gentle talent only in his handling of the three-foot-four-inch Willow, whose sweet-faced humility could make parts of the movie appealing to kids. With Billy Barty—triumphant as usual—as the High Aldwin of the Nelwyns. (5/30/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace. . . . ¶ Loews Tower East, Guild, and Loews Paramount; through July 14.)

Wings of Desire ("Der Himmel über Berlin")—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, has a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child," stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander)—hover over the bleak, divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquillizer. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. This Franco-German production is in English, French, and German. (5/30/88) (Cinema Studio.)

A World Apart—Set in 1963, it's about a thirteen-year-old girl (Jodhi May) who lives a well-ordered, ruling-class life in a fine home in suburban Johannesburg until her father (Jeroen Krabbé), who's a Communist, flees the country in the middle of the night to escape arrest, and her mother (Barbara Hershey), the editor of a small anti-apartheid newspaper, is "detained" for ninety days, and then another ninety days. Based on a semi-autobiographical script by Shawn Slovo, the daughter of the journalist Ruth First and Joe Slovo, the leader of the banned South African Communist Party, the movie deals with the girl's feeling confused and resentful—the fight against apartheid is also her competitor. In prison or out, her mother is not all there for her. The theme of the movie is the conflict between fighting injustice and what we owe to our families—or, more poignantly, a young girl's pain at the loss of her mother and father, though she knows the reason for it. Shot in Zimbabwe, this remarkable first feature directed by the noted cinematographer Chris Menges has a visual snap to it. It's luminous yet very informal. And though, toward the end, it falls into chanting slogans, it has a radiant intelligence. The cast includes Linda Mvusi, who shared the best-actress award at Cannes with May and Hershey, and Tim Roth, Yvonne Bryceland, Albee Lesotho, David Suchet, and Nadine Chalmers. (6/13/88) (Cinema I.)

You're enough to keep us awake nights.



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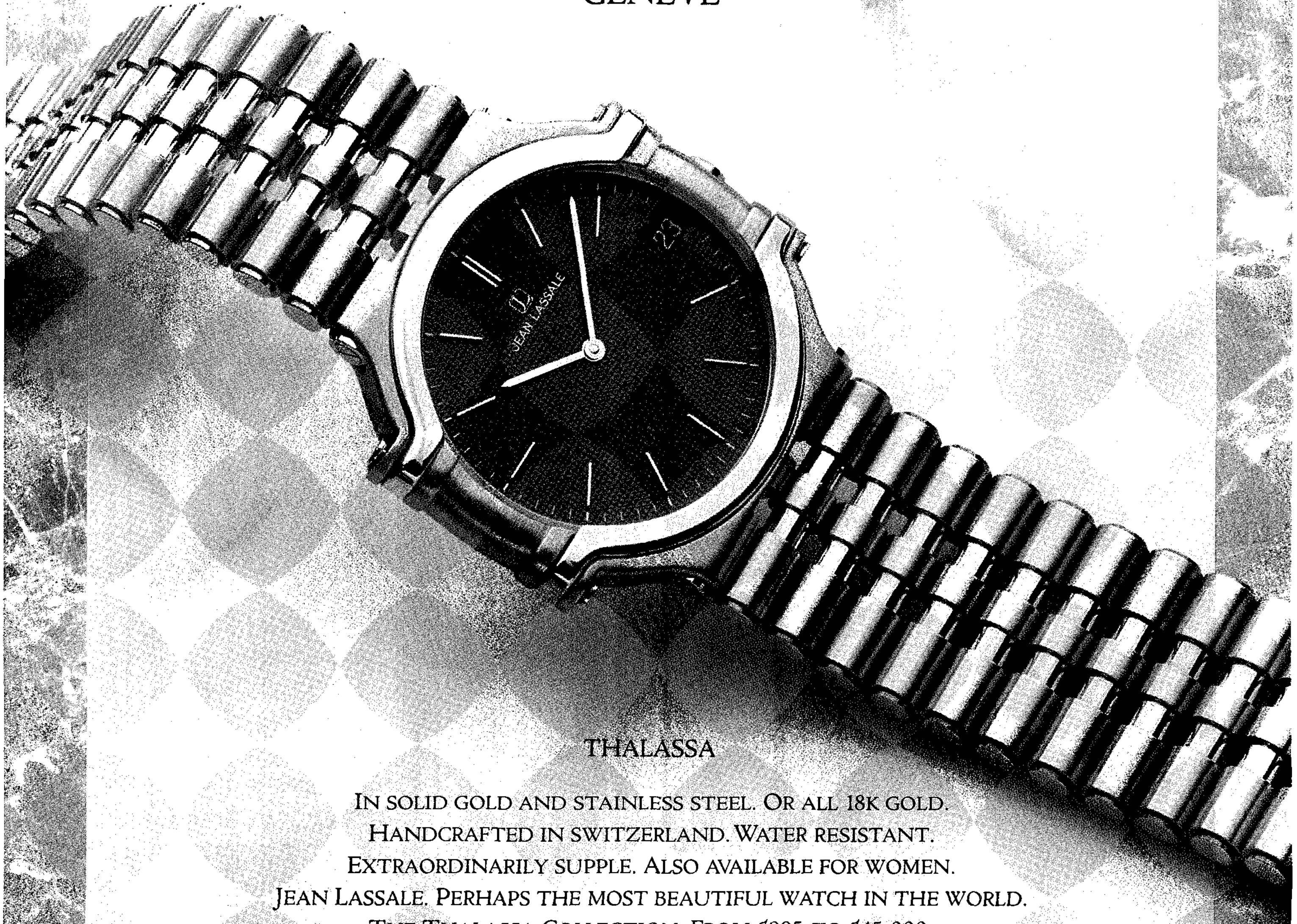

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

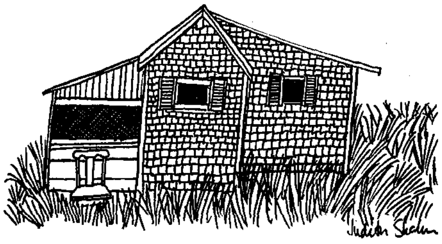
Notes and Comment

IN February of this year, news pictures and stories of huge demonstrations in Yerevan, the capital of the Soviet Republic of Armenia, suddenly began appearing in the Western press, and just as suddenly stopped—in part because the Soviet authorities have forbidden foreign journalists to travel to Armenia. So when we heard that Anahid Charents, the daughter of the Armenian poet Eghishe Charents (who died in a Soviet prison in 1937), had arrived from Yerevan recently, we arranged to meet with her one afternoon, before she departed for Washington to speak on the subject of her father's poetry, and asked her not about literary matters but about what had been taking place in her unexpectedly turbulent homeland.

"Unexpected by you," she said. "But perhaps not by us. Let me tell you how this story started. Years ago, back at the beginnings of the Soviet nation, when the boundaries of the Transcaucasian republics were being redrawn, Stalin, who was then Commissar of Nationalities, decreed that a small region substantially populated by Armenians should not be included in the Armenian republic but be kept separate as an enclave within the neighboring republic of Azerbaijan. This was, and is, the so-called autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh. Keep in mind two things about this perverse decision, which was typical of Stalin in his efforts to divide up the nationalities. First, Karabakh, which now contains a hundred and forty thousand Armenians, is separated by no more than ten kilometres of countryside from Armenia. Second, Armenians are an ancient Christian people, while the Azerbaijanis are not merely Muslims but mainly Turkic Muslims—kinsmen of the people who massacred so many Armenians in Turkey at the beginning of the century.

"So last winter, perhaps seeing the dawn of a new era with the rise to power of General Secretary Gorbachev, the soviet—or legislative body—in Karabakh took a vote in which the deputies overwhelmingly agreed to request unification with Soviet Armenia. This was never a vote against the Soviet government. On the contrary, it was a totally legal and orderly procedure, permitted under Article 70 of the constitution, which recognizes the right to self-determination. Unfortunately, the head of the Karabakh regional government took fright at these developments and ran off to Moscow, and, the next thing we knew, an official announcement was being made on the Moscow evening news which was completely dismissive of the seriousness and sincerity of the Karabakh vote—saying, in fact, that extremists had taken to the streets and were fomenting trouble between Armenians and Azerbaijanis.

"Up to then, there had been no trouble. But now the people of Karabakh decided they needed help, and so on February 20th about twenty of them made the journey to Yerevan. I remember they just showed up one afternoon in front of the opera house in the big square—this is not far from where I work, at the Literary Institute—and began asking the Armenians in Yerevan for their support. The next day, more and more people gathered in front of the opera house, making speeches and talking with the visitors from Karabakh. I remember that at our institute we had a unanimous vote to provide help—food, lodging, and so on. Soon there were a hundred thousand people gathered in the square. Groups of young people were walking all across the city, calling out to others that they should unite and show solidarity. By this time, nothing else was going on in Yerevan. Factories were closed. It was a period of great enthusiasm, also great dignity.



"Later that week, Gorbachev sent down a member of the Politburo to meet with our representatives, and then the center of Yerevan was literally filled with people. Never in my life could I have imagined such a crowd! Almost a million people—almost a third of the population of Soviet Armenia! But everyone calm, everything civilized. No police or military in sight. Workers from all the factories were there, holding banners that identified the factories they were from.

"When the meeting ended, that night, the huge crowd was still there. The member of the Politburo appeared outside the Central Committee headquarters and the crowd parted for him, and he spoke a few words, saying that our representatives had explained the situation in a clear and reasonable fashion, and that he would return to Moscow and report what he had learned. A few days later, Gorbachev himself issued a statement favorably quoting sentiments expressed by my father and announcing that the Supreme Soviet would discuss the matter of unification but that all demonstrations must cease.

"Immediately, the demonstrations stopped. Our leaders said they would stop them for one month. But in Azerbaijan terrible events occurred. First, in Karabakh, bands of Azerbaijanis attacked Armenians, causing hideous injuries and maimings—eyes gouged out, to be specific. Then, in Sumgait, a normally peaceful town in Azerbaijan, where Turks and Armenians had lived together for years, large mobs of Turks went on a rampage, armed with crowbars—since the Soviet Union forbids firearms—and killed forty or fifty Armenians and injured many more. While these attacks were going on, Armenians tried to appeal to both the police and the K.G.B., but no help was given.

"Since then, the leader of the Karabakh Party has been replaced, and that kind of violence has stopped. In Armenia, at the end of the month-long respite from demonstrations, several thousand Soviet troops entered Yerevan and surrounded the opera house and wouldn't allow any demonstrators to approach. It is obviously a difficult and dangerous time, but our outlook is still positive. The Armenian soviet recently voted unanimously for unification with Karabakh. Predictably, the Azerbaijani government voted against it, but we are confident that a way will be found. We believe in General Secretary Gorbachev and we believe in ourselves—I think we are very proud of the dignified way that we have handled the situation. But, when all is said and done, I think we also feel that there is no turning back, because there is no acceptable alternative."

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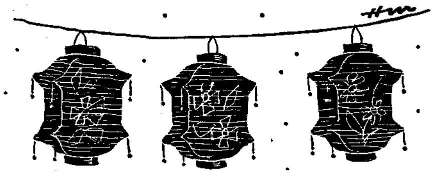
Kerouac

Ginsberg was there, in a suit and tie, alongside Ferlinghetti, in a Greek fisherman's cap, on Jack Kerouac Day in Lowell, Massachusetts. No fewer than eighteen people made speeches or gave readings at the outdoor ceremony officially dedicating the Jack Kerouac Commemorative. The poets didn't speak (they had given a reading the night before), but Ginsberg was a diverting presence. He snapped a picture of the audience during one speech, and during another he cleaned his nails. At one point, he flourished a large red handkerchief. He applauded when Representative Chester Atkins admitted that he'd been influenced by reading "On the Road." And when the wind blew hard Ginsberg wrapped both arms around a pole holding up a yellow-and-white striped canopy over the dais, so that it looked as if he were the anchor around which all the activity swirled.

There was lots of activity. Kerouac is to Lowell what Joyce is to Dublin, and, just as the Dubliners disowned Joyce for a while, some Lowellians used to be ashamed of Kerouac. He died a miserable alcoholic, after all, a writer "whose very 'success' "—in his own words—"far from being a happy triumph as of old, was the sign of doom Himself." Now these words are carved in stone on a memorial—the Jack Kerouac Commemorative—in a new three-and-a-half-million-dollar park, called Eastern Canal Park; Lowell, which is celebrating its own rejuvenation as the site of the first urban national park, dedicated to preserving the history of the Industrial Revolution, has rehabilitated Kerouac. Kerouac Day was the culmination of a week of Kerouac events: a Kerouac bus tour, a Kerouac bike tour, an exhibit of Kerouac photographs (taken by Allen Ginsberg), a forum with Kerouac scholars and biographers, and an appearance by Kerouac's widow, Stella Sampas Kerouac.

The memorial has no statue of Kerouac. It's a monument of words—Kerouac's words—cut into two sides of each of eight three-sided granite columns arranged to suggest a mandala: a circle within a square within a diamond. That the memorial exists at all is due mainly to Paul Marion, the cultural-affairs director of the Lowell Historic Preservation Commission. In his speech at the dedication Marion said that the memorial was the culmination of ten years of local advocacy. The last dissenter had been a city councilman who opposed it on the ground of "the life-style issue"—he thought it was a bad idea to build a monument to a drunken bum.

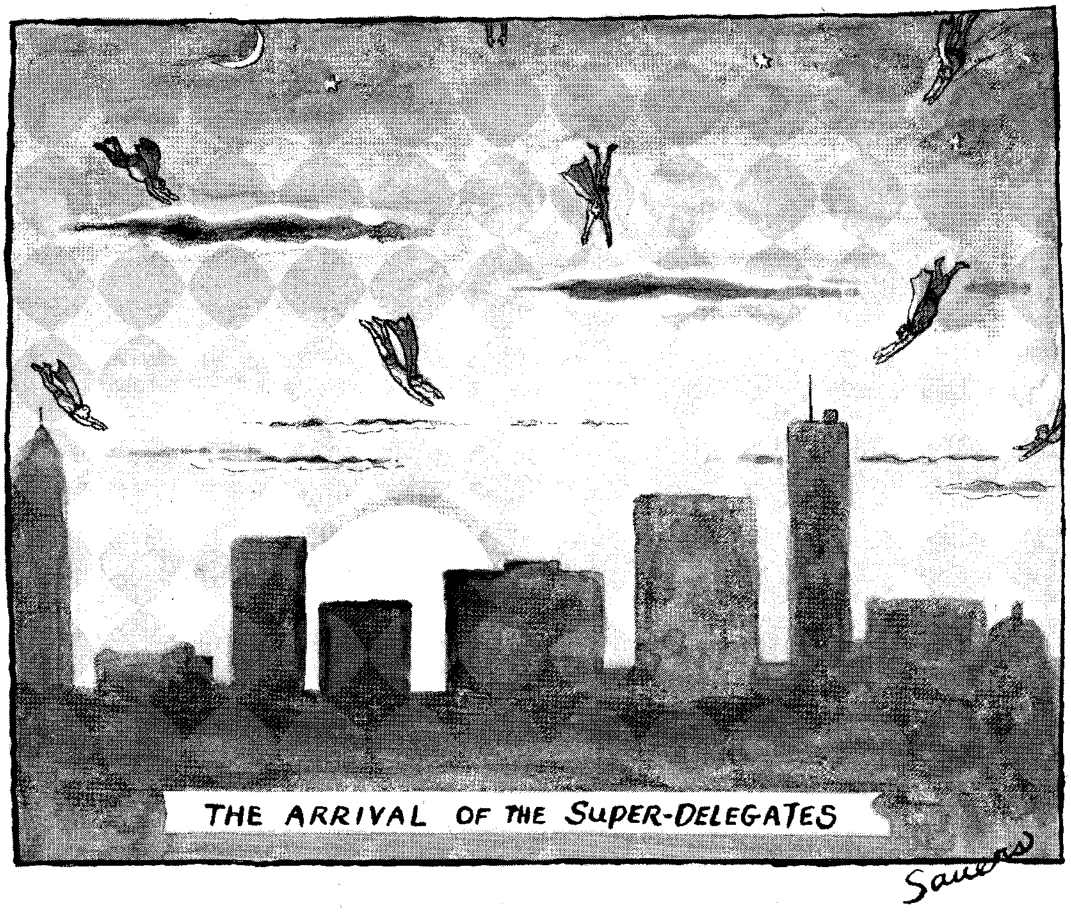
The granite for the memorial was quarried in South Dakota, cut and engraved in Minnesota, and designed by a Texan who looks like an American Indian but turns out to be a Polish-American—Ben Woitena. Woitena won the commission, Marion said, because of his familiarity with the works of Kerouac. The city had stipulated that the opening paragraphs of Kerouac's Lowell books—"The Town and the City," "Doctor Sax," "Maggie Cassidy," "Visions of Gerard," and "Vanity of Duluoz"—be used, and also passages from "On the Road" and from a biographical sketch in "Lonesome Traveler," which reads a little like an application for a grant ("—Am known as 'madman bum and angel' with 'naked endless head' of 'prose.' . . . —Am actually not 'beat' but strange solitary crazy Catholic mystic"). Woitena had read widely—all of Kerouac's books and many of the books by peripheral members of the Beat Generation—and supplied the rest of the quotations; he said that the memorial's design was an attempt to express as many facets of Kerouac as possible.



At the opening, people were carrying around twenty-fifth-anniversary editions of "On the Road" and several Kerouac biographies. Some kids had copies of "Howl" and were hoping to get Ginsberg to sign them. There were Kerouac T-shirts of both ancient and recent vintage. Former Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas asked how many people in the audience were from out of town (about half), and suggested that the rest come back in the late afternoon or early evening on some day when it wasn't so crowded. "You'll feel something," he said. "Kerouac is here."

The only thing they forgot when they organized Jack Kerouac Day was a Kerouac pub crawl. The bar that Kerouac drank at toward the end, Nicky's—which was then owned by his wife's brother—changed hands about a year ago and is now a French bistro called La Boniche. So we went to the other place that people mentioned most often when we asked about Kerouac and bars in Lowell: the Old Worthen Tavern. There we met Chico and Tom and Dan—all Lowell boys. Chico was excited because he'd been to a party with Edie Parker, Kerouac's first wife, and got her autograph and Ferlinghetti's. Dan insisted on going out to his car to get his copy of the Ann Charters biography of Kerouac—the last one in the store, he said—so he could show us a picture of Gary Snyder in Berkeley, making tea. Tom pointed to a picture propped up behind the bar and said it was Father Spike, the Reverend Armand Morissette, of the parish of St. Jean Baptiste, who counselled Kerouac as a young man and eventually buried him.

After a while, who should come in but Father Spike himself? This is not unusual, it turns out: he often has a shot of vodka neat and assures himself of a ride back in time for the six-o'clock Mass. It's all in the book "Legacy: A Biography of Rev. Armand 'Spike' Morissette, O.M.I." which is the source of the picture behind the bar. Father Spike gets the prize for Book About the Most Peripheral Member of the Beat Generation. We'll say this for him, though: he doesn't charge for the book, he gives it away.


THE ARRIVAL OF THE SUPER-DELEGATES
Sauers

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Highlights from the Collection

KEN BRECHER is the son of a candy buyer for Sears, Roebuck. He grew up in Highland Park, Illinois, went to Cornell, and, in 1967, won a Rhodes scholarship to New College, Oxford. In a puckish moment, he found himself telling the head of his college that he planned to spend the summer going down the Amazon. As it happened, the head of his college knew of an expedition leaving the following month. Ken Brecher wound up spending two years along the Amazon, living with the Wausha, the most isolated of all the tribes in the Xingu River region. When Brecher returned to Oxford, in 1972, and gave a series of lectures, the playwright Christopher Hampton chanced to be in the audience, and he turned Ken's experiences with the Wausha into the play "Savages." Brecher became involved with Hampton's dramatization, and decided that what really interested him in life was the theatre. He started directing shows at Oxford, and eventually found himself at the Mark Taper Forum, in Los Angeles. There an interest he had developed in the problems of the deaf led him to produce the new play "Children of a Lesser God." Then he decided that it wasn't theatre that interested him, after all, but museums and children. So in 1986 he took a job as the director of the Children's Museum in Boston, and he is still there, overseeing what has become one of the most joyful museums around.

Running through this unusual biography is a thread of postcards. Ken Brecher owns about seven thousand postcards, and keeps them in shoeboxes. He doesn't think of his postcard collection as a collection in the sense that a stamp collection is a collection or the Frick Collection is a collection. It's for him more like an eighteenth-century cabinet of personal curiosities, or leaves from a private journal. (He has reproduced some of his postcards in a memoir called "Too Sad to Sing.") The other day, he was in New York, and he talked to us about the meanings of postcards and showed us some highlights from his collection.

"The first postcards I ever received were from my father," said Brecher, who is in his early forties, wears glasses with bright-red frames, and has a thatch of gray hair. He speaks rapidly and softly, and his manner is vivid and animated. "I started collecting postcards when I was five years old," he went on. "My father was on the road a lot when I was small—eventually, he became an executive with Sears—and he sent my twin sister, Karen, and me postcards almost every day. Each of them came from another small town, most often in the South, and all of them carried almost exactly the same message: 'Dear Son, Take good care of Mommy. I'll be home on Friday with a present for you. Love, Dad.' They're incredibly powerful for me now. They convey my father's essential qualities more accurately than any single memory I have."

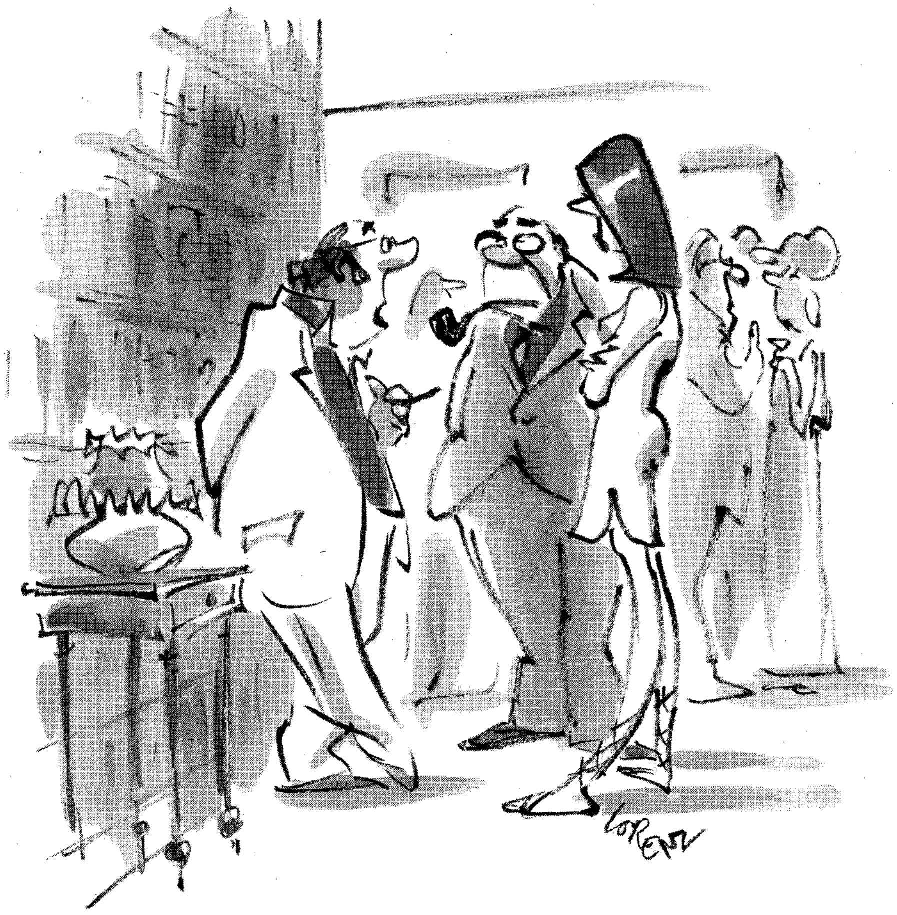
Brecher himself mails postcards to friends almost every day, but he usually buys in duplicate, and keeps a copy of most of the postcards that he sends. "Sometimes I have to wait for a long time to find the right person to whom to send a postcard that I love," he told us. "For instance, just yesterday morning, at the National Academy of Design, on Fifth Avenue, I found this postcard—of a lovely painting by Robert Blum called 'Two Idlers.' It shows two people on an American back porch. One is in a hammock, and they're talking. It seems to me that this is an image showing the exact *opposite* of what it is to be idle. I have an image in mind of the couple I would like to send this postcard to. They would be a couple with whom I am close friends; they are a little too ambitious and a little forlorn, and find each other again as a couple only one or two weeks each year, on vacation. I would like to urge them to take the time now. I know couples who are *like* this couple, but I'm not sure that I've met exactly the right couple yet. When I do, I'll send them the postcard.

"In Beijing, a few weeks ago, I found this card—another one whose recipient I can imagine but don't yet know. The picture of a single camel at the very end of the Great Wall of China evoked for me a line from, I think, Brecht: 'Where, the evening that the Wall of China was finished, did the masons go?' I thought, Here it is! I thought of all the workers—masons and foremen and cooks—who have been sent out to the very end of the empire to finish the wall, and now it's done. They're about to celebrate—I mean, *God*, the thing is done—and they look around, gaily, and they see a single camel on the sand. The recipient of this card ought to be someone who has just completed a seemingly impossible work—a successful Mr. Casaubon.

He paused, and then said, "Postcards, in a sense, have to do with our love of miniatures. I think my interest in children and my collection of postcards fit together. For instance, people often give the museum objects that they think are emblematic of childhood. They're always miniatures—doll houses, small things—though not necessarily things that children have ever actually played with or enjoyed. Miniatures must have something to do with our feelings about children—our desire to care and our desire to dominate. Postcards are miniatures of the world in that way, too. This touches on something else that fascinates me about postcards. People almost never throw them away. Even the least sentimental people I know collect postcards, though they're not always aware that they're doing it.

"Here's my favorite postcard of a painting. It's the famous fourteenth-century 'Annunciation' by Simone Martini—the Angel of the Lord in a cape with a tartan lining, and Mary looking at him shyly. A single detail in this image suggests to me a complete view of life. Mary is very discreetly keeping her place in the book she was reading when the Angel arrived. She has just received word that the greatest event in all human history is going to take place, and while she listens she keeps her finger in her book, so that she'll be able to find her place after the Angel leaves.

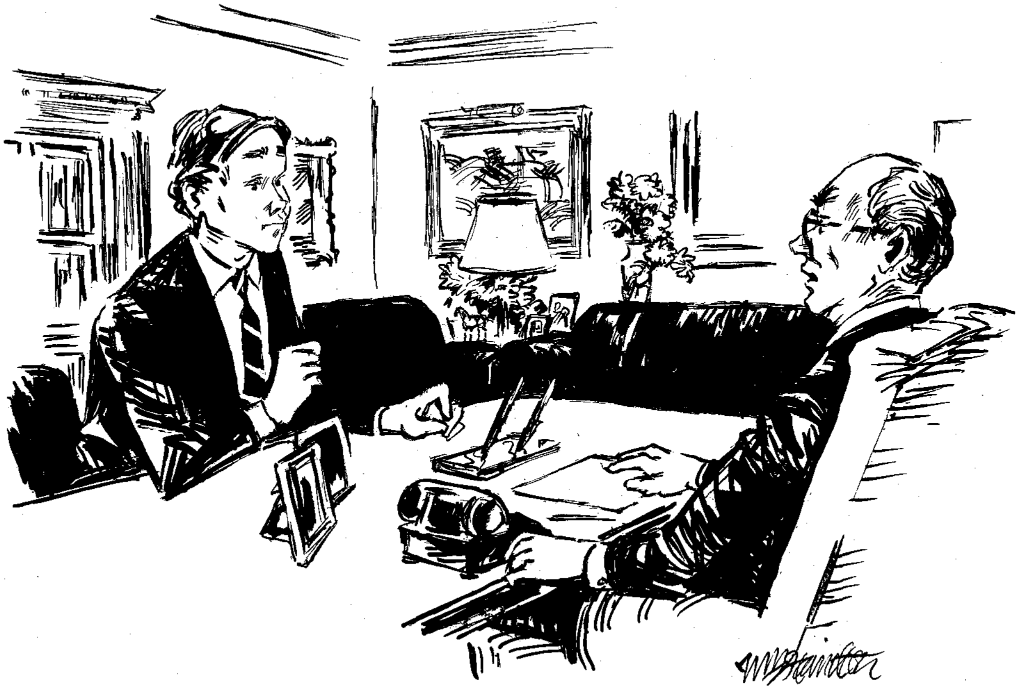
"The saddest postcard in my collection is this one. I found it in Paris. It shows the chief of the Wausha tribe along with some friends. The chief was one of the most remarkable men I have ever known. He was a descendant of a tribe called the Cortunapu, most of whom had been wiped out by a party of German explorers in the nineteenth century, and when I knew him he was the only man alive who still spoke the Cortunapu language. He taught it to me. For a little while, we had a language that belonged only to the two of us. None of his twelve children were interested in the language; they just thought of it, with a shrug, as Dad's thing—like my father's talking about Sears. I was looking at the postcard, and feeling terrible. I had promised him I'd return to the Amazon, and I never did. Then I picked up the postcard and looked at the back, and saw that its caption read 'Indians at rest after a ceremony.' "



"I couldn't hack it in L.A.—I was decontextualized."

Empirical

WHEN Charles Guigno, the director of operations, introduced himself, we left off counting the representations of his building that we had seen on the way to his fifth-floor office (a large metal seal in the lobby, shiny metal badges worn by some of the personnel, a door-size wooden relief in a reception area), and began to talk with him about the changing of the lights on the building, which was what we had been invited to see. He said that the only lights that members of his staff changed by hand now were the floodlights on the setbacks of the building. The two hundred and forty lights in the tower section of the one-thousand-four-hundred-and-fifty-three-foot-eight-and-nine-sixteenths-inch-tall world-famous edifice are automated and can change to red, green, blue, yellow, or white at the touch of two sets of controls, on the nineteenth floor, which is the service level. The lights on the setbacks—two hundred and four thousand-watt halide lamps—take about four hours to change by hand. There are fifteen scheduled color schemes each year: red, black, and green for Martin Luther King, Jr., Day ("We don't have black lights, so we just turn off some of the lights to get the same effect," Mr. Guigno said); red and white for St. Valentine's Day; red, white, and blue for Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day; green for St. Patrick's Day; white and yellow for Easter Week; blue and white for Steuben Day; red and white for Pulaski Day; red, white, and green for Columbus Day; blue and white for United Nations Day; red, orange, and yellow for autumn; red and green for the week between Christmas and New Year's; and white all the rest of the time.



"When people here have ideas, they do not bounce them off me."

When we concluded our interview (during which we also learned that which baseball team's colors would go where in the event of a subway series is a question to which management is giving serious thought), Mr. Guigno introduced us to Louis Esposito, a mechanic, who normally works the color-change shift. We followed Mr. Esposito up to the seventy-second floor, through a vacant office, and out a window onto a setback lined with light fixtures. Looking eight hundred and sixty-three feet nine inches straight down, we grabbed at the edge of the parapet.

"You never stare too long," Mr. Esposito said. "When you're out, especially up on eighty-eight, where there's no parapet, you start to think you could actually reach out—that you could touch another building or, if you were to jump, land on the roof, or something. And if you keep staring at the view you start to lose it."

Mr. Esposito was about to change the lights to red, white, and blue for the Fourth. In preparation, he and another worker, Al Mujadzic, began to remove filter rings from the halide lamps that ring the building. He said that the lights, from bottom to top, used to be blue, white, and red, but then someone noticed that the order was wrong, and now they put the red on the bottom and the blue on top.

Mr. Mujadzic, who was born in Boston, grew up in Yugoslavia, and returned to this country after thirty years, with an Eastern Mediterranean accent, yelled that he had found a bird. Sure enough, a wren was hopping among the light fixtures, oblivious of our presence on the windswept ledge of the thirty-seven-million-cubic-foot building.

"I need it," Mr. Mujadzic said of the bird, and he began chasing it. Mr. Esposito tensed. We remembered that the building's lights are turned off entirely on foggy nights during the migration season, to prevent confusion in the avian mind.

"He can't fly, or he's tired, Al," Mr. Esposito said. "Hey, there are *laws*, you know."

"I take him back to Astoria," Mr. Mujadzic said. He took a few more steps after the bird, and then bent down and picked up a nickel.

"So *this* is where the money lands," we said.

"Yeah, this floor and eighty-one. Eighty-one is the big setback for that," Mr. Esposito said.

We asked how much money they found on the average ledge of the hundred-and-two-floor structure.

"Sixty cents," Mr. Mujadzic said, totalling his morning's take in the palm of one hand.

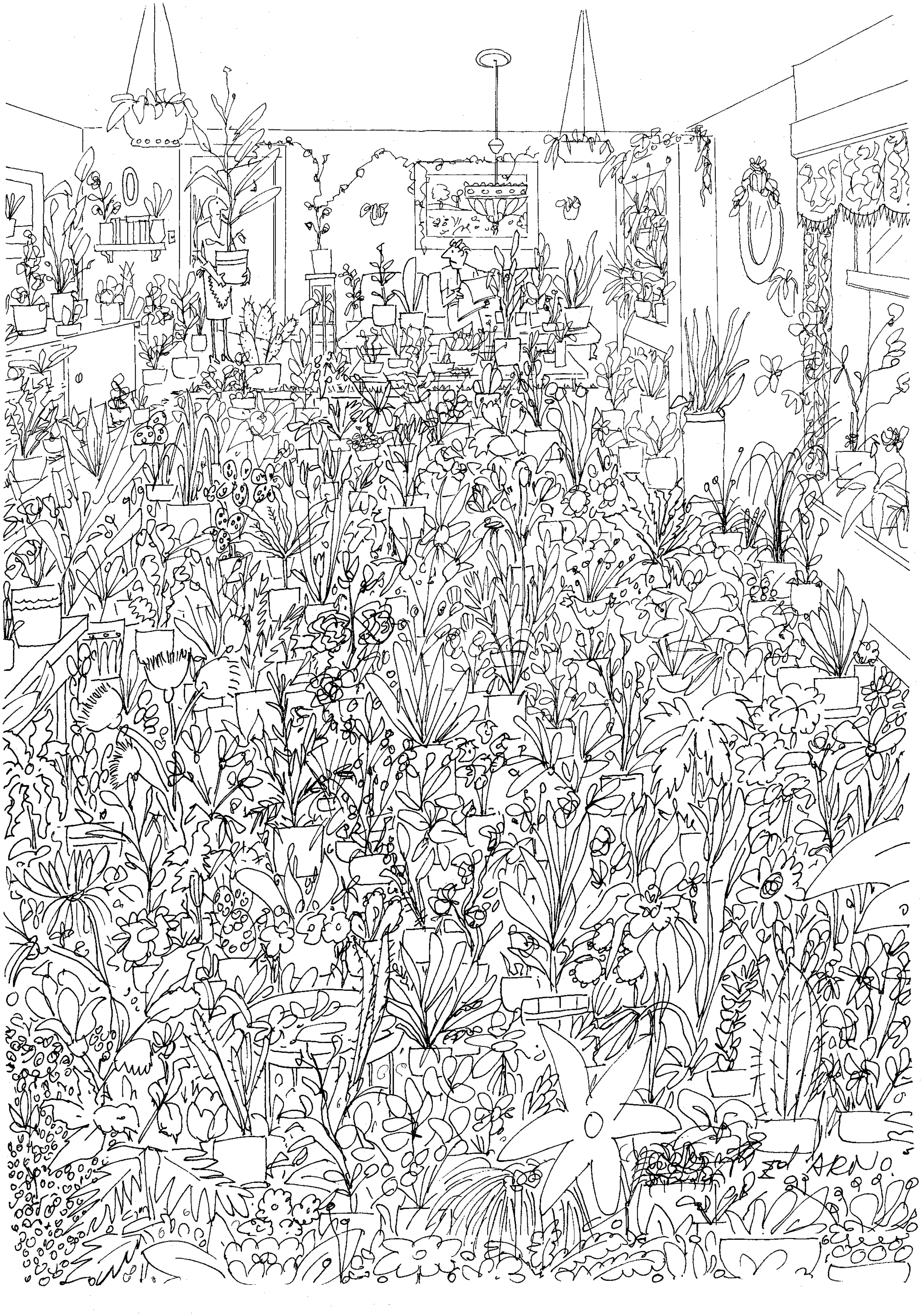
We asked if the money they found might be evidence of a desire on the part of sightseers to hurt passersby below.

"No," Mr. Mujadzic said. "People don't think about the danger. Throwing money is just something they do for good luck." He added that throwing a penny over the edge was not, in his opinion, as lucky as throwing a quarter.

While we were talking to Mr. Mujadzic, John O'Leary, a third member of the crew, arrived with a wooden cart of red filter disks.

Mr. Esposito showed us that each of the disks had a small hole in the center, for ease of handling and to draw off the heat, and that the disks consisted of a thick transparent upper layer, a red transparent gel, which to us looked like thick cellophane, and a thinner transparent sheet backing the gel. He told us that in winter, when it's windy, the men changing the lights tied themselves together, like mountain climbers.

"One color change last winter, it was freezing, right?" Mr. O'Leary said. "The wind was blowing like crazy. And a kid that we had was putting a disk here on the east side. And this thing"—he indicated the red gel in the center of the sandwich—"blew all the way the hell out from the building." He gestured into space. "And I ran around the ledge and caught it on the other side. They saw it, but not everybody will believe it, you know? It's weird. That's how the wind blows up here."


Ed ARNO

WHY WE'RE SO TAKEN WITH BRITISH ROYALTY

A U.S. journalist sees in his own memories of the Royal Family
the story of a great American infatuation.—*TV Guide*.

BOUGHT *TV Guide*. Mr. James Brady, the author of the novel "Holy Wars," has tried to explain why we're so taken with British royalty, drawing on his own recollections and memories. Are they the same thing? I can never remember. Now, as it happens, the question "Why *are* we so taken with British royalty?" has long vexed me, but it did not occur to me until reading Mr. Brady's article (May 21-27; Charles and Di on the cover; second cover line, "The 'Baby M' Dilemma . . .") that I could consult my *own* recollections and memories to find the story. Well, it did once or twice occur to me, but it seemed like an ugly thought. I don't know if you have memories you can be proud of, but gosh, cherish them if you do. Mine are in a military school in Pennsylvania; they don't socialize, they don't mingle; I have them home for the holidays, but it's not always good. Yet in looking at their pictures, I notice that a few have a kind of royal tinge about them after all.

Here's one. I find that the question "Why *are* we so taken with British royalty?" first surfaced in my life at a small weekend party on West Fourteenth Street, in a period before *zero tolerance*, during which there was some tolerance before dinner and more later. Heady days. My hostess was dressed, as usual, in a burnous of deepest purple, in the manner of Jimi Hendrix, or in mourning for him—I can't remember. I do remember the look of incredulity on her sweet young face when I remarked, "You know, I often wonder why we are so attracted to British royalty."

"Like which one?" she asked with a snarl.

"Princess Anne, for instance. Oh, she's a little headstrong, and she does seem to have contempt for Americans as a people, and perhaps as a nation, but seeing her on television, in the Rose Garden . . ."

I got no further, as my friend, who functioned at that time as a stern mistress or goddess, raised the decibel level of "In-a-Gadda-da-Vida," the catchy little tune we were listening to, and asked, as many thoughtful people did in those days, whether the title meant "In the Garden of Eden." I should tell you, by the way, that I am of the opinion that "In-a-Gadda-da-Vida" *does* signify "In the Garden of Eden," and I regard all those who hold another opinion as uninformed or even foolish.

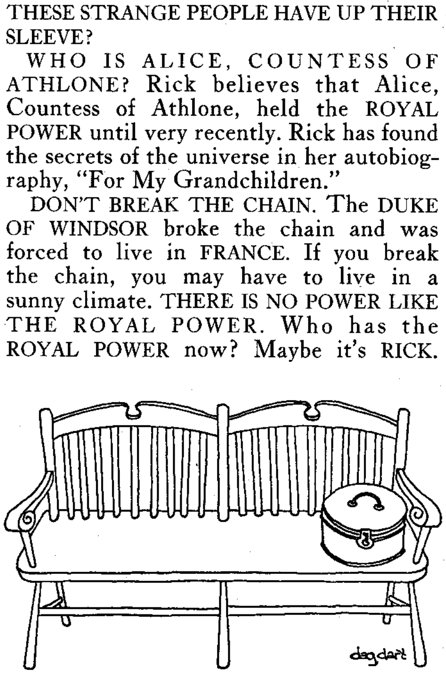
This provides a bit of background. Now I think I'd better get right to my neighbor Rick. What an attractive guy, and smart. Rick and I have lived for some time cheek by jowl in the Stock Apartments. This is (or these are) a series of very unattractive tenement apartment buildings on the Lower East Side. Either Mr. Stock wished his name to be passed down to men like myself who would curse it, or a selfish impersonal real-estate cartel wished to express its disdain for its work. Rick and I live here. Rick is a little alienated and starts chain letters, which he changes in secret, subtle ways after each further development of the chain so that different "levels" are created (as he says) within the "receiving group" (his term). I reproduce one I found on the landing:

Don't Break the Chain

PRINCESS MARGARET ROSE threatened to break the chain and spent twenty years in TORMENT. Ancient Wisdoms predict: The secret POWER of the BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY is incalculable. QUEEN MARY was MAY OF TECK. She DIDN'T BREAK THE CHAIN and was rewarded with GREAT WEALTH and NEAR TOTAL CONTROL OVER HER CHILDREN. JUST WHAT DO THESE STRANGE PEOPLE HAVE UP THEIR SLEEVE?

WHO IS ALICE, COUNTESS OF ATHLONE? Rick believes that Alice, Countess of Athlone, held the ROYAL POWER until very recently. Rick has found the secrets of the universe in her autobiography, "For My Grandchildren."

DON'T BREAK THE CHAIN. The DUKE OF WINDSOR broke the chain and was forced to live in FRANCE. If you break the chain, you may have to live in a sunny climate. THERE IS NO POWER LIKE THE ROYAL POWER. Who has the ROYAL POWER now? Maybe it's RICK.



I am a dignified person, and when Rick opened his door while I was in the act of picking this document up, I was embarrassed. "Perhaps your life is devoid of hope?" Rick volunteered. "You don't need hope, really, when you have the power of the Royal Family working for you." Frankly, I was alarmed by Rick's quick approach, and yet how could I refuse to continue to talk to him when my own fascination with *our* fascination with the question "Why *are* we so taken with the British Royal Family?" was so patently obvious. I credit the Royal Family with a friendship I value today.

IN my final memory, or recollection, coming right up, I make contact *in a way* with a "royal." As I say, the Stock is vile and dirty (I see now it *is* the singular I want), and no nice girl will visit me here, so, like many other young eligibles, I advertise, and like many advertisers I sometimes put into my advertisements a shine, and a glow, which some buyers have been so kind as to say they *do* find in the product at hand, but others . . . well, the public is hard to please. In any case, I have been "Polished Professional," "Happy Hedonist," and even "Urban Surfer." Every one a success, by the way. As I note, the Stock is dirty, and I'm afraid to go to other people's houses, so a lasting relationship is really out of the question. What I want is one date at a bar, and by and large that's what I get. But to one personal advertisement I got no response. Perhaps the shine was too extraordinary, the glow too unexampled—in any case, there was silence, lack of action, on the part of postal patrons everywhere, until out of the blue there came a single cream-colored envelope (not crested, no obvious *royal* marks). In the envelope, on a plain sheet of understated elegance was the simple, forceful phrase "And I'm the Duchess of York."

I find that in sorting through my royal memories I am not satisfied that I have explored every nook and cranny of the question "Why are we so taken with British royalty?" Perhaps my readers will help. Just write "Good-Looking," care of this magazine.

—George W. S. Trow

THE GRAMMAR OF LOVE

ALLBRIGHT, MOSES. Allen, LaDonna. Bates, Jamal. I know every name by heart, intone each one to myself as I walk down the hall, but when I enter the room and tell the class my own name no one writes it down. A smile twitches my lips and I repeat my name. No response. Am I really here? Would they notice if I turned around and walked out? I seat myself and begin calling out names. Beaton, André. Cummings, T. J. I pause to match faces with names, but no one looks me in the eye; and by the name Daryl Dalrymple I'm in a panic that I'll never teach these students anything. God, they won't even write my name down! From the back of the room I hear a commotion of sounds: low, amazed baby noises vibrating the air with longing and wonder. I look up and receive his gaze. This baby's bright black eyes are fastened on me. He strains forward in his mother's lap, one hand opening and closing like a summons. McDonald, Rolan. Now the baby responds to each name by clapping the desk and sounding out with loud peals of delight. Washburn, Angela. Eyes cast down, head bowed shyly, she speaks into the baby's ear, quieting him. I watch them for four or five seconds, catching myself in a bad habit of staring too long at intimate moments in public places. The baby reaches for her ear and my heart swells. I repeat the name: "Angela Washburn." "Here," she whispers. "Thank you," I reply.

SIXTY-THIRD and Martin Luther King Drive. Sixty-fourth and King Drive. Sixty-fifth and King Drive. I've lived in the city all my life—I grew up in a leafy neighborhood on the North Shore, attended Saturday-morning classes on constellations, mining, and Neanderthal man at the Museum of Science and Industry by the lake, learned about King David, Queen Esther, and Sandy Koufax at a Sunday school in West Rogers Park, received a Doctor of Divinity degree at a university on the South Side—but I've never been south of Sixty-second Street. After months of unemployment, I accept a job teaching a class of basic English at a commuter college at Ninety-fifth and King Drive, and the safe borders of my life have been assailed: three mornings a week, I drive deep into the dark heart of south Chicago, past boarded-up storefronts, abandoned movie houses, and gutted, skeletal apartment buildings, past dealers in doorways and addicts swaying down the middle of the street in search of a morning fix; after fifteen blocks the desolation gradually gives way to supermarkets, hardware stores, used-car lots, small lawns, and bungalows. But in my nightmare my car stalls or runs out of gas before Seventy-fifth Street, and a gang of blacks closes in on me. "Let me go!" I shout, holding my textbook, a bible of grammatical rules, high above my head. "I have important work to do! I'm teaching subject-verb agreement today!"

"'MORE education don't hurt anybody.'"

The second time I teach my class we go over exercises from the textbook. Each student reads a faulty sentence out loud and then revises it. Their voices are wooden and uncertain. Every face is blank. Only the baby, reaching out to me like a castaway on a raft, truly sees me.

"More education don't hurt nobody," says the student, Tanya Toney. She looks doubtful. "Man," she sighs, "that don't sound right neither."

I ask if anyone can revise the sentence correctly. A few hands go up.

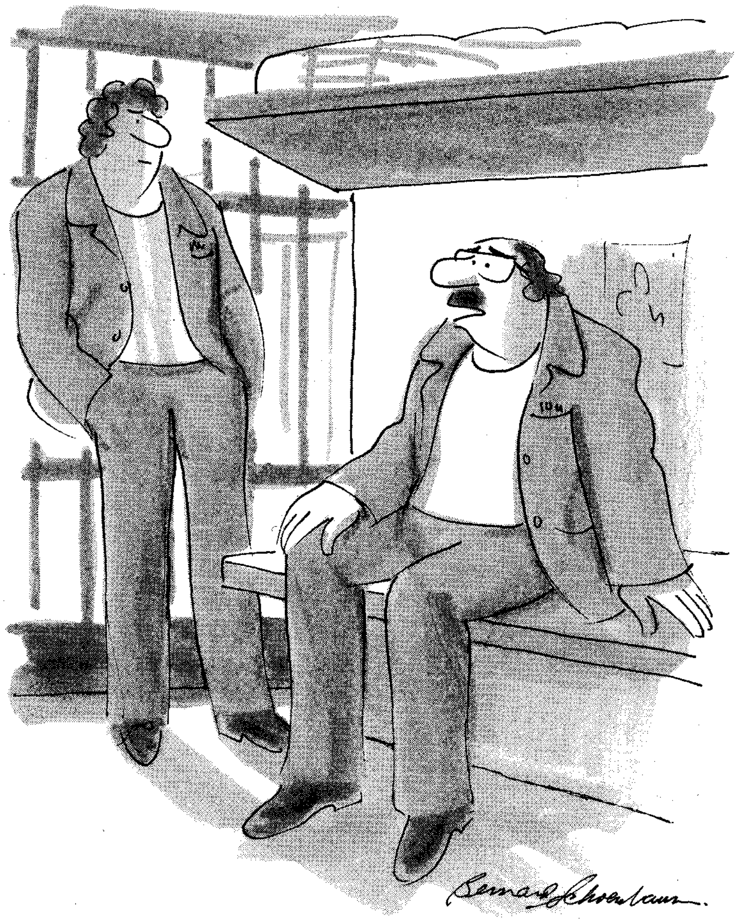
"More education doesn't hurt anybody," says a woman in the front row.

"Yes," I say. "The faulty agreement is between the subject and verb, not between the verb and object. Does everybody understand?"

The baby's head tilts and totters like a gyroscope.

Look, we're all in this together, I want to say. Can we *agree* on that? I'm probably unqualified for this job. I memorized these rules last night. I don't know a thing about English grammar. I've never been south of Sixty-second Street. So we'll learn all these rules together. Is this a fair agreement? We'll learn all about subjects and verbs, nouns and pronouns. We'll memorize every irregular verb. All two hundred of them! Then we can really begin to understand each other!

LAST June, after receiving my degree, I moved out of the graduate-student apartment building I had lived in for five years. My new next-door neighbor is a blind man named Raymond. For years I have seen him walking around the neigh-



"All along I thought our level of corruption fell well within community standards."

borhood, his head raised and his white cane pointing to the ground in front of him like a divining rod. I always marvelled that he knew exactly where he was going.

Two weeks after I move in, Raymond and I approach the building at the same time. "You're my new neighbor, aren't you?" he asks, as I hold the door open for him. How does he know me? My footsteps? An odor? I raise my elbow and bury my nose in my armpit. I've passed him a number of times but have never thought of introducing myself. I've never talked to a blind person. What would I say? Excuse me, you don't know me but I see you all the time . . . So now I'm embarrassed that he has introduced himself first. Somehow it seems inappropriate, like a woman asking a man for a date.

Raymond invites me into his apartment for a beer. He's so cheerful. I've never thought of a blind person as being happy. On the other hand, I have twenty-twenty vision and I'm miserable.

I tell Raymond about my course. "Did you study linguistics?" he asks.

"No, divinity."

"Are you religious?"

"Not really."

He looks puzzled.

"Did something happen?" he asks.

"Oh, no, nothing like that," I laugh. "Religious belief isn't a requirement for divinity school." That's the same explanation I gave my mother when I enrolled and she worried I was converting. The answer never completely satisfied her. At my graduation, she said, "So now what am I supposed to call you? Doctor? Father? Or maybe you prefer Reverend?"

"What was your specialty?" Raymond asks.

"Religion and literature." I explain that I analyzed similar modes of address to lovers and to God in metaphysical poetry.

"Do you believe in the soul?" he asks hopefully.

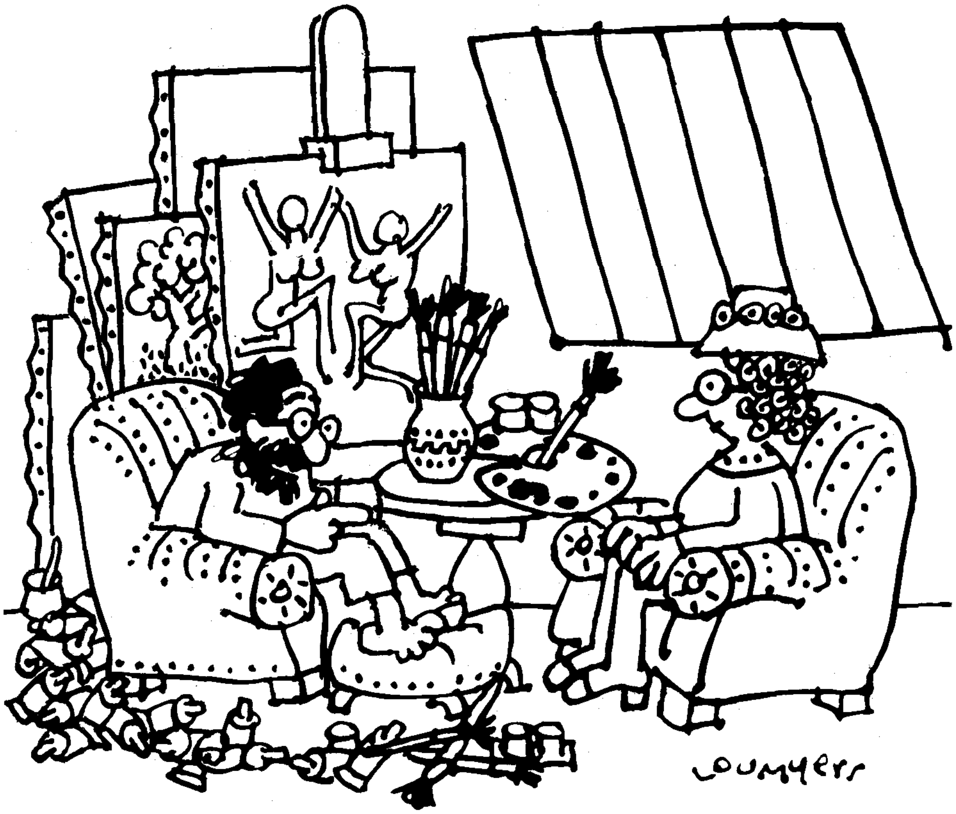
"Not that I'm aware of."

I've never understood why people think they can learn something intimate by asking questions about my academic work.

"Are you in love?"

"No."

Raymond laughs. "You're in sad shape."



"Painting is stronger than I am. It makes me do what it wants."

• •

I can't believe the personal questions he's asking me. But maybe you can do that if you're blind. "What about you? What kind of shape are you in?"

"I'm religious. I believe in the soul. I'm not in love."

He looks to be in his middle twenties.

"Have you ever been?"

He shakes his head. Now I feel bad. Maybe I wouldn't have asked him anything so personal if he could see me. (But what I really want to know, the question I'm dying to ask, is how he walks around the neighborhood. Is it an extrasensory feat? In the black world behind his eyelids, does he see the streets of the neighborhood like veins of light on a radar screen?)

Raymond asks if he can see my face.

"What?" I ask dumbly.

"Like this." He places his fingertips on my forehead, as if anointing me. With exquisite slowness, he draws his fingertips down my face, tracing eyebrows, nose, lips. My skin is burning, my muscles are drawn tight. Our faces are inches apart. His mouth is half open and his eyeballs off target, the way someone looks at you through the dark side of a one-way window. I can't fathom the reverence in his face. "Relax," he whispers. I place my hands over his. "I'm sorry," I say. "But I really have to go."

"CAN anybody tell me which verb ending is used with all singular nouns and third-person-singular pronouns?"

A man in the front row raises his hand. He is the shape and coppery brown color of a Bosc pear.

"Say your name," he demands.

"Excuse me?"

"Your name. How you say your name?"

"Hosinsky."

"Spell that."

His face glowers, but when I write my name on the board he smiles with recognition. He has no upper teeth, only a ridge of shiny brown gum.

"Hey, man. You Polish?"

"No," I stammer, "not really."

He looks disappointed, as if he were sure he had the right answer to a question.

"Damn if I didn't think you was Polish."

He is Daryl Dalrymple. When his turn comes, he reads "John and Mary asks a lot of questions." He puzzles over the sentence, rubbing his brow and then pressing down on his thighs, which are as big as beer kegs. He looks up at me and smiles slyly.

“There ain’t nothing wrong with this sentence, Hosky.”

I ask him what the subject is.

“John and Mary.”

“The verb?”

“Asks.”

“Is the subject singular or plural?”

“Plural.”

“So how do you get the verb to agree with the subject?”

“Plural! John and Mary *asks* a lot of questions! Damn,” he laughs, “*you* asks a lot of questions!”

I explain the rule.

“You saying, a singular subject have an ‘s’ on the verb, but a plural subject don’t have an ‘s’?”

“Exactly.”

“Damn,” he sighs.

Finally it is Angela Washburn’s turn to read. I look in her direction and call her name. The baby coos like a pigeon under the roof of an old house. She whispers in his ear for a few seconds and he quiets down. I lean forward, longing to hear her words.

“Tom like to read, but I love to dance,” she recites. She studies the sentence and tightens her arm around the baby’s waist.

“Tom likes to read, but I loves to dance.”

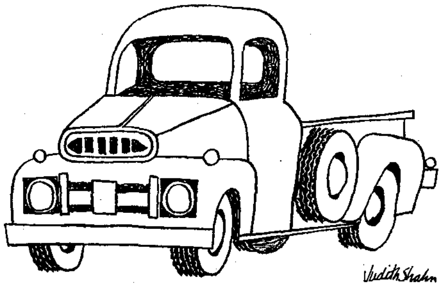
I say something to her about the first-person singular. The baby lays his head against her breast and closes his eyes, as if the secret frequency between us has gone dead.

THAT night I lie in bed repeating to myself: “I loves to dance . . . I love to dance.” Only one letter separates us. *I love, you love, he loves, we love.* I marvel at the way the verb opens up like a daylily. How easily *I love* blossoms into *we love!* Conjugating the verb over and over, I experience a sensation of movement, like a widening echo, a journey outward. But after a time the motion of the verb transports me to my nightmare world: Sixty-third and King Drive, Sixty-fourth and King Drive, Sixty-fifth and King Drive. I think of the bombed-out buildings, the Elevated tracks screening out the sun like a twenty-four-hour eclipse, and I realize that *I loves* won’t flower overnight into *I love*. That “s” won’t disappear any more easily than an old root can be yanked from the earth.

SOME nights Raymond comes to my apartment and questions me about love.

“A man and woman are secret lovers for forty years. They see each other only two or three times a month, when they spend the afternoon in a hotel room in a strange city. But they write to each other almost every day. Their letters are erotic and sad; they chronicle births, deaths, marriages, business, husbands and wives. The man’s view of life is especially black. He is very rich but complains bitterly that everyone is after his money. He hates his wives and mistresses, can’t communicate with his children, mistrusts his business partners. He tells his lover that she is the only human being he has ever loved; she is the only thing that is beautiful or decent or true in his life. He says that without her love he probably would have killed himself years ago. The woman is also very unhappy. She and her husband have had virtually nothing to say to each other for years. Their marriage is emotionally and spiritually dead. Now here is the question: Why don’t the two lovers ever get married?”

“Maybe he’s afraid she’ll ask for lots of money and be like all the rest.”



“No. In fact, in his letters he pleads with her to accept money. He tells her she is the only person he’s ever wanted to give money to.”

“She doesn’t want to leave her husband and cause her family pain.”

“Perhaps—but what is a couple of years of pain in return for many more years of happiness?”

“I have no idea.”

“I think the two lovers liked things just the way they were. If they married they would have lost the element of imagination. They could have loved each other every night, but they would have lost the chance to imagine loving each other every night.”

“Where did you hear this story?”

“From my grandmother. We discovered her love letters after she died. I always thought her story would be a great movie, but who would be interested in a movie like that in this day and age?”

“You go to the movies?”

Raymond smiles cagily, as if this were the question he was maneuvering me to all along. “All the time.”

ONE afternoon I shadow Raymond around the neighborhood. I know he’s never been in love; I know he believes in the soul; but I don’t know how he gets from the library to the liquor store to the supermarket. There has to be more to it than simply memorizing every street. He has to know their system—how the streets conjugate, irregular forms of a route—as if the neighborhood were his secret language. Walking in his footsteps, I think of the dull syntax of my own life, of the five years I walked the same route between my graduate-student apartment building and a library cell. I wouldn’t see other streets in the neigh-

ABANDONED RAILWAY STATION

The agent’s office like an abbey chancel.
The smell of wood smoke from the baggage stalls.
Large empty walls, and a water stain,
Ultramarine, like a fresco of Perseus,
Head in hand, fleeing the golden falchion.

The silence of thousands of last goodbyes.
A dried ink pad. Stanchioned ceiling.
And a cognate, terra-cotta dust over
Everything, with an on-tiptoe atmosphere
Of a *boule de neige* before it’s shaken.

—SHEROD SANTOS

• •

GOING TO HELL ?
Hell isn't really so bad! Here are a few tips to help you cope:
① PACK A LOT OF COOL CLOTHING.
② BOOK AHEAD. Whether you're going by handcart, hand basket, or another mode of transport, SEATING IS LIMITED!
DEPARTURES
WHEN
WHERE
HOW
8:07 HELL HANDCART
8:11 HELL HAND BASKET
8:37 HELL LUNCH PAIL
8:59 HELL BUS
9:07 HELL CLUTCH PURSE
9:11 HELL HANDKERCHIEF
③ BRING STUFF TO DO. Remember, whether your stay is a good one or just a big, stupid waste of time is COMPLETELY UP TO YOU!
PARCHEESI
WAR AND PEACE
LEARN TO SPEAK HINDI
R. Chast

borhood for weeks. I wouldn't go beyond the borders of the neighborhood itself for months. How could I have let that happen? At an intersection, waiting for the light to change, Raymond and I are brushed up against each other among a crowd of people. I know he is going home and I recite to myself, Fifty-sixth and Stony Island . . . Fifty-sixth and Cornell . . . Cornell and Fifty-fifth . . . Cornell and Fifty-fourth. . . . He turns and looks at me. "Alex?" I hold my breath and keep silent, as if I were hiding in a closet with someone else's love letters or diary. The light changes and I go my own way.

"'IF you practice the piano regular, you will soon be able to play real music.'"

Angela Washburn stares at her book. The baby stares at me. His blunt, fleshy arm moves back and forth like a wand. I imagine he is inviting me to enter their aura of intimacy. I beam back a reply in stealth: *I love, you love, he loves, we . . .*

"If one practice the piano regular, one will soon be able to play real music."

She doesn't even look up to see if she has revised the sentence correctly. I explain that the sentence is wrong because of the adverb and not the pronoun. "Do you understand, Angela? 'Regular' is an adverb because it modifies 'practice.' So there should be an 'l-y' at the end of the word." I say this rule as ardently as if I were reciting Dante. The baby reaches for me, but she pulls down his arm as if drawing a shade.

MOST days Raymond and I have lunch at Sol's, a neighborhood deli run assembly-line fashion by ten or twelve Vietnamese. They labor at a furious pace, swabbing rolls with mustard and mayonnaise, slicing pickles and tomatoes, slapping meats and cheese onto bread, shouting in loud bursts of Vietnamese.

Only Raymond slows them down. When he comes tapping through the door, they eye one another as if he were the strangest sight they have seen in this strange land. Otherwise, their only relationship to the world beyond the counter is the items on Sol's menu. "You chop livah! You hot dog!" each worker shouts out as customers proceed through the line. I always order juice, because the word allows me a sense of connection with Sol's Vietnamese.

"You jew-is!" the juice worker shouts at me.

"That's right!" I always shout back. "And what of it?"

"Ya, ya," he replies, with a huge smile, "you jew-is!"

TWO or three afternoons a week Raymond and I go to the movies. I feel sinful, but weekday afternoons are the best time to go to the movies with a blind person. The theatres are nearly empty, so Raymond and I can talk in the dark without annoying anyone, although the first few times I succeed in annoying Raymond. I describe everything—reaction shots, scenery, camera angles. He sighs, fidgets, then shouts, "I know Meryl Streep looks sad. I'm not deaf, too, you know!" The three other people in the theatre all look at us, as I slide down in my seat.

Eventually my technique improves. At a local revival house, we go to a Hitchcock double feature, "Shadow of a Doubt" and "Strangers on a Train." With my lips an inch from his ear, I draw Raymond into the world of visual echoes, light and dark shadows, murderous hands. In "Shadow of a Doubt," when young Charlie moves her hand down the bannister to show Uncle Charlie she is wearing the ring that links him to his crimes, Raymond grips my forearm as I describe the exchange of looks between the two Charlies. I've never known anyone to get so worked up at the movies.

At the end of "Strangers on a Train," Raymond says, "I just love Bruno Anthony's voice. I could come here every day and listen to him seduce Guy Haines."

"Seduce him?"

"Of course. Couldn't you tell that Bruno is in love with him?"

"Raymond, Bruno is a psychopath! He murders an innocent woman for thrills."

"No," he declares happily, "he murders for love!"

THE newspaper says that on the average person a college diploma is worth two hundred thousand dollars more than a person who has no college diploma. On the other hand, by the *list of jobs, you are basing whether or not to go to college, is a incomplete list.*

I spend hours studying Angela Washburn's language, as if her blurred grammatical patterns and derailed subordinate and independent structures were a map to her soul. On her paper I write lengthy comments about her faulty comparisons, with the weary heart of someone floating a message in a bottle. One day, though, she shows up at my office, her paper in one hand and the baby in the other.

"This ain't so good, is it?"

Good or bad. Right or wrong. Black or white. Don't think this way, Angela. I want to tell her I regard these grammatical rules as a prism refracting her iridescent intelligence. I want to confess that for years the words I read were alien as stars, but now I read her papers and watch the shimmering colors blend together like a rainbow on hot, wet pavement after a rainstorm.

I ask her where her subjects are.

"Excuse me?"

"Your subjects? Where are your subjects in the sentence?"

She stares at her paper, searching for her subjects; her baby stares at me, his head tilting and swaying, his eyes bright with wonder. Finally she answers, "They everywhere."

"They sure are," I laugh.

The baby bleats with delight and claps his hands on my desk.

Angela, as if embarrassed by the excitement, looks down at her paper and smiles shyly.

The most problem and hurt is knowing and hoping the future one want do not exist after college.

I ask her what the main emotions are in this sentence.

She gives me a searching look, like someone hearing news she can't quite believe. "Hurt and hope."

"Yes! Excellent! Do you see what the problem is, then?"

"My sister, she went to college, but she can't get no job."

Ask her what her sister does now, I tell myself. Ask her about her hurts and hopes. Tell her that you hurt yourself by walking the same insular route every day for five years, building your routine into a wall, and now you hope to learn a way out.

Instead, I ask her about her gerunds.

"My what?"

" 'Knowing' and 'hoping' are your gerunds. The problem is that you attach them to the same complement and thereby cancel out your meaning."

She gives me a bruised look, then turns her eyes away.

ANGELA is not in class the next day. Daryl Dalrymple, as always, is sitting in the middle of the front row.

"What's your thing today, Hosky?"

"Irregular verbs."

"All *right!*"

I ask Daryl to read the first sentence of his paper. He faces the class and recites, "I was born and breaded in the South."

A number of students laugh.

"Damn right I was," he says. "In Greenville, South Carolina."

"After your mama breaded you, how she fit your butt in the frying pan?"

Now everybody laughs.

"Y'all saying something 'bout my mama?" Daryl says.

"What's the infinitive form of the verb?" I interject.

"Breed," someone answers.

"Right," I say, relieved. "To breed."

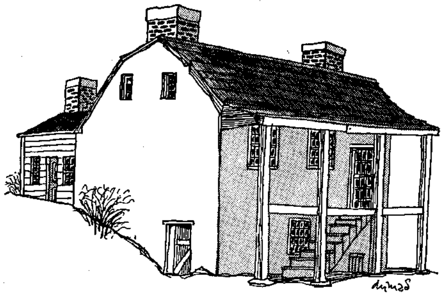
"Breed!" a woman repeats angrily. Her name is Yvette Woolfolk. She is more moralist than grammarian. "You know, I read in this Alex Haley book how they used to breed black folks like they was horses. That's how their birth records was kept. Like they was horses!"

There's a chorus of "Yeah!"s. I'm not aware of how red my face has become until one of the students says, "Hey, man, why you look so guilty?"

"Don't worry, Hosky," Daryl says, "we don't blame you. You *Eye*-talian."

ONE afternoon Raymond knocks on my door and asks if I want to see a John Wayne Western called "The Searchers." I agree to go when he tells me I don't have to annotate the movie for him. "I've seen it dozens of times," he says. "You'll love it."

When the movie begins, John Wayne's brother and sister-in-law have been massacred and their two young daughters kidnapped by Indians. John Wayne and some other cowboys go off to look for the girls. They find one of them raped and murdered and spend five years searching for the other one. Eventually they find her—she has grown up into Natalie Wood—during a raid on a Comanche camp. John Wayne raises his hand to kill her because she has become a wife of the Indian chief, but then he changes his mind and rides home with her on his horse.



I think the movie is fine, but I don't love it; and I don't say anything, because I know Raymond, leaning forward in his seat and holding his fist to his mouth, is strongly moved. I'm not in the mood to hear him explain everything I failed to notice.

We go next door for a beer.

"Isn't that a beautiful story?"

"Beautiful! Raymond, John Wayne spends five years on his horse looking for Natalie Wood, and then he almost scalps her because she was screwing around with the Indians."

"But at the last moment he was transformed by love."

"Oh, now are you going to tell me that John Wayne really wants to seduce his teen-age niece?"

"No, no. She's his best half. Didn't you see how ill at ease in the world John Wayne was? How he isolates himself from love and caring? He's not a whole person. But when he discovers Natalie Wood he realizes his capacity for nurturing and love. He becomes whole. It's a beautiful story."

"Raymond, sometimes I wonder if you and I see the same movies."

"We see the same movies, Alex, but sometimes I wonder if you have any imagination."

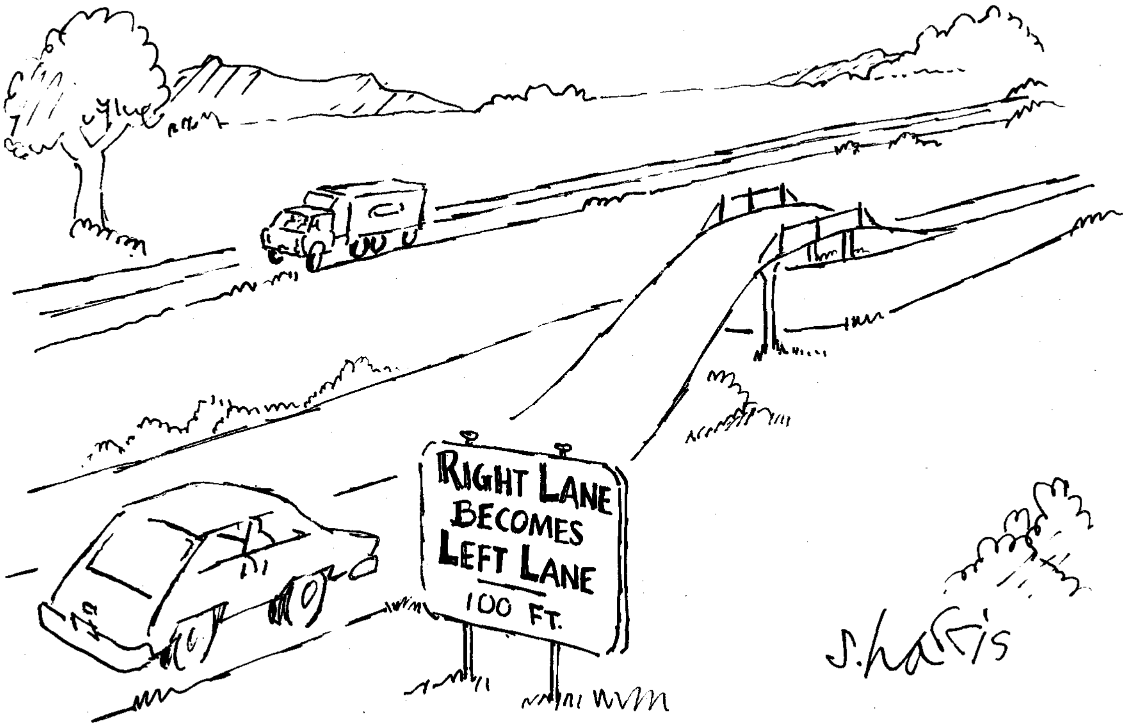
"I have imagination, but I also know something about real life."

Raymond smiles beatifically. "You're really threatened by me, aren't you?"

"What are you talking about!" I explode.

"You always have to claim that you know more about life just because you're sighted."

"Jesus, Raymond, who said anything about sight? I just think that sometimes you romanticize life. That story you told me about your grandmother, for instance. I think if you knew anything about the way people really love, you would know that your grandmother and her lover must have



endured great pain. Two people who love each other don’t keep apart just because they’d rather *imagine* being together. I’ll tell you why your grandmother and her lover stayed together for so many years. Because the alternative was probably nothing—no intensity, no romance, nothing. And even if the price is extreme pain, most people would rather have pain than nothing.”

“That’s just your interpretation.”

“No, that’s my *experience!* I once had a relationship with a married woman, too. I know what happens, Raymond. My lover was unhappy in her marriage, just like your grandmother, just like most people are unhappy, but she didn’t want to think of herself as the kind of woman who would leave her husband for another man. But you know something? The more painful things were between us, the more inflamed our loving became. Our afternoons in my apartment stretched longer and longer. I remember one afternoon toward the end. We had been making love for hours in the July heat, and we were only half awake. Our bodies were plastered together. At that point the pain was realer than the love: I couldn’t even say whether we were in love anymore, even though for months I believed I could never love anyone else. But for a few moments that afternoon, looking down the length of the bed at our bodies, I realized we could end the relationship right then and spare ourselves more agony, but we didn’t, we couldn’t. And do you know why? Because the alternative would have been nothing. All she would have had was her dull marriage. And what would I have had? Nothing.”

Raymond draws back rigidly.

“Why did you tell me that story?”

“What do you mean? I just told it, that’s all.”

“I’ll tell you why. Because you’re insecure. So you have to tell me all about your sweaty sexual adventures. But let me tell you something. I really feel sorry for you if this is the view of love your experience has given to you.”

• •

SIXTY-THIRD and King Drive. Sixty-fourth and King Drive. Sixty-fifth and King Drive.

For three blocks I frantically press down on the gas pedal, but my car only sputters and wheezes until the life completely drains out of it at Sixty-fifth and King Drive. It is an arctic Chicago morning. Far down the deserted street, I see the swaying lights of a distant bus. The windshield of my car is beginning to ice over. I bundle up my coat and run across the street to a coffee shop. The place is crowded and noisy; everyone stares furtively at the white boy with cheeks the color of a red Delicious apple. I call the emergency road service from the pay phone, then squeeze into the only free space at the counter. A man a few seats down tips his cap to me and smiles as if I were an old, familiar friend. I stare straight ahead. On the wall facing me are portraits of a honey-haired, blue-eyed Jesus and an airbrushed Martin Luther King gazing out as if Heaven were just beyond the horizon. Between the two pictures is a hand-printed sign warning the patrons not to curse when ladies are present.

The only lady present is a stout, freckled, cinnamon-colored woman working behind the counter. As she wields her coffeepot like a Bible, her style is more Sunday-school teacher than waitress.

“Who was it lived in the land of Uz?” she asks the men at the counter, the pot poised above their heads.

They all stare down into their plates.

“You, Brother Jackson!” she says. “Don’t you know?”

Mr. Jackson looks warily at the raised pot.

“Noah?” he ventures.

“No, it wasn’t no Noah,” she says, thumping the pot on the counter. “It was Job, a man of blameless and upright life.”

She works her way down the counter, pouring coffee and posing questions.

“How many criminals was crucified alongside of Jesus?”

“Two,” says one of the men. “One on his left, the other on his right.”

“That’s better,” she says, “that’s better.”

“What kind of easy questions y’all asking this morning, Sister Broadnax,” another man says. “Ask him what was the names of them two criminals.”

“What names?” she says, her eyes narrowing.

“Don’t tell me you don’t know?”

“Well, what was they?” she says impatiently.

“Leroy and Marvin.”

The whole counter explodes in

laughter. I smile into my coffee. I've become invisible . . . except to the man three seats away, who has been staring at me from the time I sat down. When the seat beside me is free he gets up and sits down in it. I'm suddenly enveloped in an odor of oil and sweat. His face is sprinkled with white stubble; his down vest and overalls are spotted with dark, shiny stains.

"Morning," he says.

"Morning."

"Your name is Alex, right?"

"Yes . . ."

"You don't remember me. My daughter introduced us at the graduation last spring."

"Yes, now I remember. You're Naomi Freeman's father. I'm sorry I didn't recognize you."

"Well, I'm not wearing my Sunday best today. I just got off work. The cold's froze up everybody's boilers. I don't usually work nights, but folks has to have heat. Oh, Mrs. Broadnax," he says to the woman behind the counter, "this boy went to divinity school with my daughter."

"You a preacher?" the woman asks me.

"Well, not exactly . . ."

"You don't have a church?"

"No."

"Don't worry, honey. You still young. You'll get yourself a church soon enough."

There are some scattered amens from the men at the counter.

"We all belong to the Zion Baptist church," Mr. Freeman explains. "Mrs. Broadnax is a deacon. She keeps us honest every day."

"So I've noticed."

Mrs. Broadnax holds the pot above my head.

"More coffee, Reverend?"

MITES

A house-dust mite (*Dermatophagoides farinae*)
is not a house-mouse mite (*Liponyssoides sanguineus*)
any more than speaking Portuguese is speaking Manx
or an elephant is a hyrax, though both are ungulates.

To be a mite at all! To be so small
you can rest as in a bunk bed beneath a flea's scales,
or expend a lifetime in a single chicken feather
or the mite-pouch (acarinarium) of a carpenter bee!

To dwell happy in the mouth of a long-nosed bat,
like one species of Macronyssidae's protonymph,
causing tissue destruction and loss of teeth,
or beneath the skin of a mammal, creating mange!

Think how Nature slaved over these arrangements.
Thirty thousand species of acarines,
fifty from the Antarctic alone, and some found
three miles up Everest, or a mile down in the sea!

Itch mites, cheese mites, monkey-lung mites, each
making its way through the several larval stages
to an awkward copulation (discounting
parthenogenetic ticks) and easy death—

what fresh perspectives! Specks of our shed skin
delicious boulders, our human pores
lubricious dish-shaped living rooms, and particles
our largeness elides palpable to mites, who loom

in the scanning electron microscope's patient gray
light as many-tentacled, with chelicerae,
as hobbled as stegosaurs by their quaint
equipment, as endearing as baffled bears,

these mini-spiders characterized by
lack of a waist, lateral eyes, and tininess.
We marvel; we pity; we loathe; we try to forget
perspectives from which *we* are smaller yet.

—John Updike

• •

Raymond and I agree not to go to the movies anymore. "We're both too emotional for it," he says. He is over at my apartment, and I volunteer to go down the block for some beer.

"Someone called just after you left," Raymond says when I walk in. "I think it was your mother."

"My mother?"

"Well, she was *somebody's* mother. I answered the phone and she demanded to know who I was. I said, 'This is Raymond,' and she said, 'And who is Raymond?,' and I said, 'Just a friend,' and she said, 'What kind of friend?' "

"It's my mother."

I go into the bedroom and call her back.

"Your friend sounds *fairy* nice."

"A fairy? Raymond? No, Mom. He's blind."

"And you're deaf, Mr. Ph.D. Are you keeping something from me?"

I tell her it's always nice to hear from her; she tells me to behave myself.

I return to the living room. "Raymond," I laugh, "my mother says you sound 'fairy nice.' "

"Alex," Raymond laughs, "you should listen to your mother."

He crosses his legs and smiles coyly.

"You're serious, aren't you?"

"I'm always serious."

"How come you never told me?"

"I thought you knew."

"How am I supposed to know?"

"Alex, I don't know why it even matters."

"Well, it does."

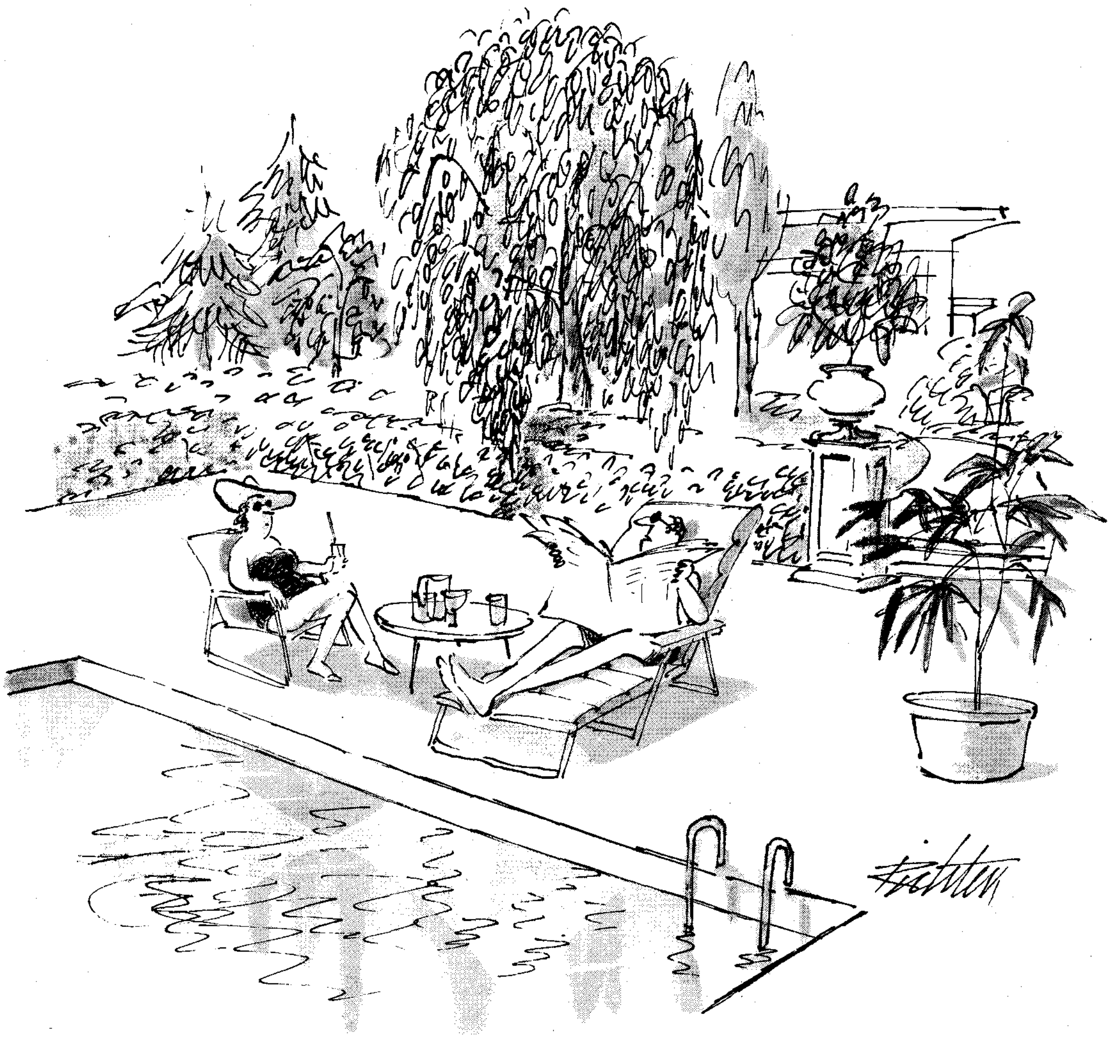
"How?"

"I don't know. It just does. It matters a lot!"

"Why are you so angry?"

"Because you've been dishonest with me."

"When?"



"I know we live in troubled times, but I don't seem to be troubled."

• •

"When you told me you've never been in love. You knew I was talking about women."

"No, Alex, you were talking about blind people. You were really asking whether or not a blind person was sexual. So I'm sorry if you think I was dishonest. But I really don't think I'm responsible for your ignorance."

I DON'T talk with Raymond for weeks. He doesn't knock on my door; I don't knock on his. When we both approach the building at the same time, I hold the door open for him and he goes by without a word. One day I walk past Sol's and see him sitting at a table by the window. He is eating salami on rye. I stare at him until I'm dizzy with hunger.

I place my order and proceed through the line. In front of me is a schoolboy who can barely see over the counter. Today he decides to test the vocabulary of Sol's Vietnamese.

"Hey, Jap," he says experimentally.

"You chili dog!"

"Jap! Jap!" he says more boldly.

"You grape pop!"

"Kung fu!" he shouts, and leaps into a martial-arts stance, drawing one hand behind his head and moving the other hand as if he were casting a spell.

Today I've ordered a root beer, but the juice man is so happy to see me he shouts out, "Ya, jew-is!"

Raymond, his chin stained with mustard, stands up abruptly, grabs his cane, and angrily beats his way out, leaving a half-eaten sandwich. The Vietnamese watch him with open-mouthed amazement.

ANGELA WASHBURN is not the only mother in the class. All the other mothers band together when one of the men declares in a paper that landlords have the right not to rent apartments to women with children. "If I owned a building," he says, "I wouldn't allow no children. They noisy. They destroy the property. A man have a right to protect his investment." His name is Tazama Brown. He is in his early forties, is partial to leather and gold chains, and has slanted eyes, a pencil-line mustache, thin tight lips.

"Do you have children?" one of the women asks him.

"Hell, no. What do I want with babies?"

"I know about men like you," Yvette Woolfolk says, her arms crossed high on her chest. "You the type I warn my daughter about," she continues. "Y'all go crazy if you suspect your lady even looking at another man, but when she's pregnant with your baby you out the door, yes you are."

"That's right, that's right," some of the other mothers chime in.

Another woman objects, "Don't say all men is like that. I been married twenty years to the sweetest man before Jesus."

"I don't say all men," Yvette Woolfolk says. "Just ones like Tarzan."

Tazama Brown smiles and rocks back in his chair, tracing the line of his mustache with thumb and forefinger.

"You ladies just don't know how to hold on to a man," Daryl Dalrymple explains. "I been married three times, so I know about ladies. Before a man marry you, you always so sweet, you always smell nice. You always saying, 'Oh, baby, you like the way I do you?' But when you and your man is married, you always tired, you look bad. So what y'all expect? A man have to look around for another lady who treat him right."

Nearly every woman in the class is knotted up in laughter.

"Oh, Lord," says Yvette Woolfolk, brushing away a tear with the back of her hand. "The ladies must be lining up for you."

Then one of the women notices me. "How about you? How you treat your wife?"

I say that I'm not married.

"But you so polite!"

"And handsome."

"He real shy, though."

"I think he has himself lots of lady friends."

"Yeah, Hosky," says Daryl Dalrymple. "How many lady friends you have?"

Now I am aware of my face turning bright red. Angela Washburn embraces the baby tightly and buries her head in his neck. I want to move to the back of the room, sit in the empty chair next to them, and confess that I'm also in pain. I hurt, too, Angela.

I AM eating lunch at Sol's when something outside excites all the Vietnamese. They rush out to the sidewalk for a better look. Through the window I can see Raymond. He is jerking his head around like an angry and frightened marionette. I leave my lunch and come outside. The Vietnamese are laughing uproariously. The laughter agitates Raymond even more. He is cursing and swinging his cane violently around his feet like an erratic compass needle. Pedestrians step around him. I walk over to him, realizing that he has momentarily lost the language to find his way home. "Raymond." He twists around, his face a commotion of fright and relief. We are silent for some seconds, all the words we could say to each other standing like a wall between us. Then, in my most intimate voice, I say, "Fifty-sixth and Stony Island . . . Fifty-sixth and Cornell . . . Cornell and Fifty-fifth . . . Cornell and Fifty-fourth."

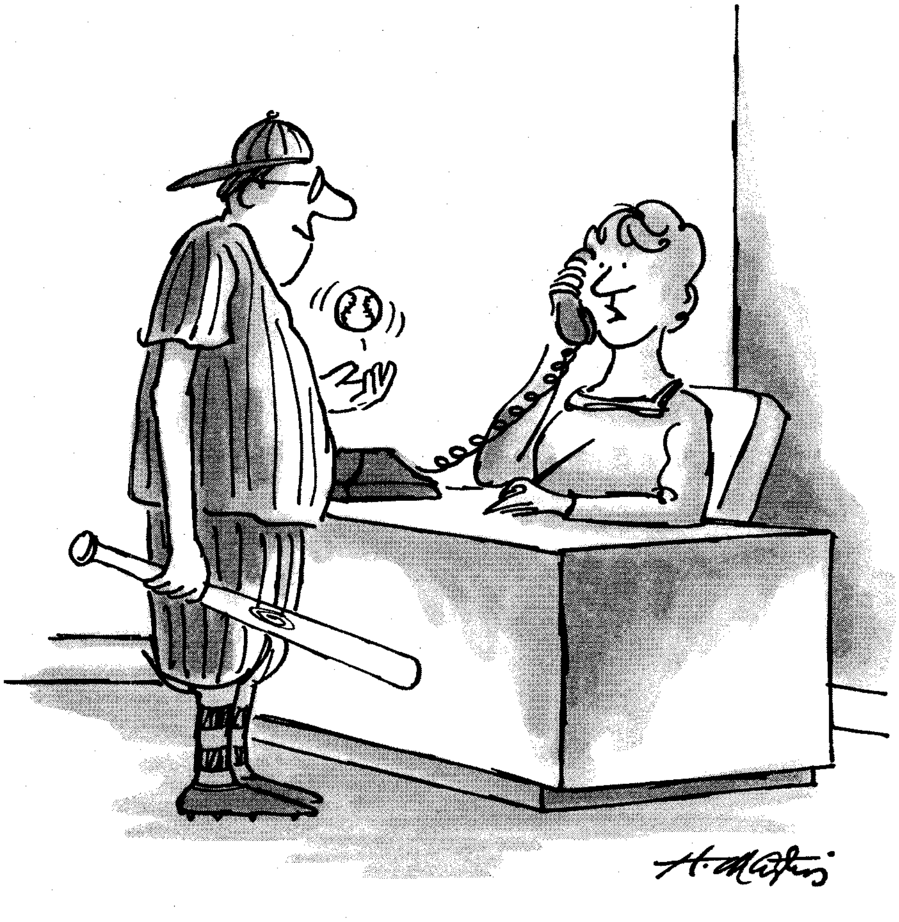
AFTER being absent for a week, Angela Washburn and her baby are waiting outside the classroom.

"My baby been sick." She pauses, then adds, "Ain't no one else I can leave him with."

The baby is resting on her shoulder. His eyes are rheumy. I resist an impulse to reach out and stroke his cheek.

"Is he better now?"

She looks me in the eye. "He all right," she says softly.



"*Mr. Foster is here. He just wants to touch base.*"

Two days later she comes to see me in my office with a new paper. She reads a sentence: "Last winter my baby and me almost froze is the reason we got us a new apartment." The baby reaches out to me; his fingers, centimetres from my nose, ply the air as if he were practicing piano scales. I am on the verge of asking if they're warmer now. Is there no one else in the world to stay with? Are you all alone, Angela? Is it just you and the baby? My palms are moist and the blood in my neck heats up my face. "Your trouble is caused by a faulty predication. The linking verb 'to be' forms a sort of equation . . ."

The baby wails like a siren. His eyes screw tightly shut, his forehead wrinkles from the strain. Don't cry, don't cry, I want to say. These are not my words. She bounces him lightly on her lap, whispering in his ear, "Be cool, sugar. Be cool." He doesn't quiet down and she searches around in her purse. She comes up empty-handed.

"I left his bottle in the car."

"You can leave him here if you want to get it."

She gives me a frantic, flustered look.

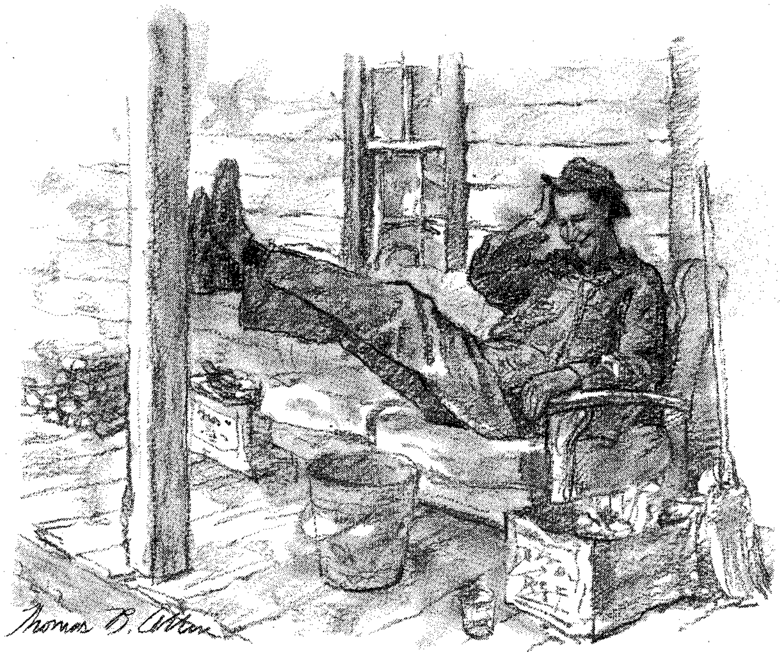
"Really. I can watch him."

She leans the baby back in the chair and goes out. His wails become even louder. I wave and smile at him, but it doesn't help. His face is a miniature portrait of agony and grief. I can't resist any longer. I get down on my knees and bring my face close to his. His cries subside, like a balloon slowly expelling air. His black eyelashes are matted with tears. He stares at me with glistening, wondrous, slightly crossed eyes as the huge, complex landscape of my face looms in front of him. He reaches out and grabs my nose. I lean closer. His sweet fingers brush over my features with a spidery grace. He is emitting low, breathy satisfied sounds. I close my eyes and the world changes tenses: I am keenly aware of living in the present, aware of every inch of my face, of every follicle and cell, of being defined, shaped, loved. I hear his mother's footsteps coming down the hall. I know I should open my eyes and get up. But I don't move a muscle. Even when I know she is standing in the doorway, watching her baby hold my face in his hands.

—ADAM SCHWARTZ

PROFILES

AN OVERGROWN JACK



IN the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, there lives a mountain man who is seven feet tall and as thin as a cornstalk. His name is Ray Hicks, and he's a champion storyteller. The unpainted frame house he lives in, the oldest on Beech Mountain, was built by his grandfather, and Ray Hicks, the eighth generation of his family to live in these mountains and tell stories, was born in it, sixty-six years ago. The house clings to a cleared slope in the cold shadow of Gold Rock Point, some four thousand feet up Beech Mountain, a few miles from the Tennessee line. Scrap wood, tree stumps, and firewood are piled in the yard. Up by the rusting mailbox, an old car disintegrates in the weeds. In a field in back of the house are rows of potato plants, through which Hicks's rabbit dog, Slick, often wanders. Slanting down the yard are three or four wringer washers, an outhouse, a springhouse, and a flower garden ablaze with lilies and lupines.

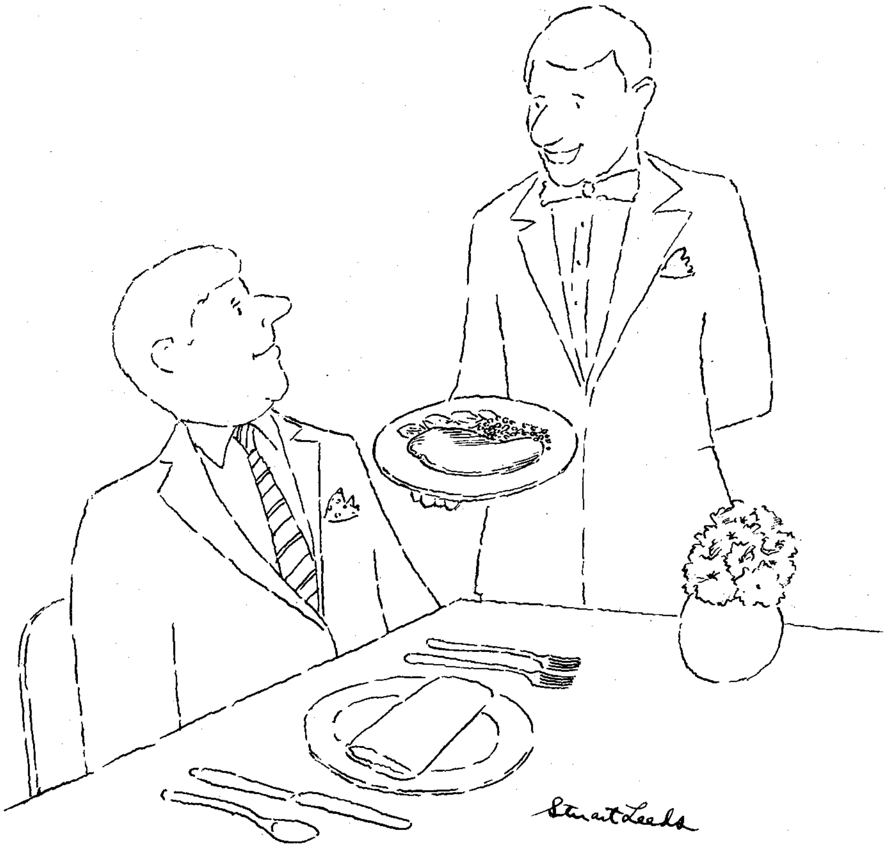
Here Hicks tells his stories, without charge, to tourists who seek him out, to neighbors, to anyone who has a few hours to spare. Most of the stories are "Jack tales," about the knight-errantry of a poor mountain boy, an American cousin of the farm boy in "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Jack the Giant Killer." In the cycle of fifty or so tales, Jack outwits thieves, witches, and ogres to win fame, riches, and love. Supernatural beings and magic often come to his aid. The savior of imprisoned maidens in some tales, he is two-faced, a trickster and murderer in others. Jack may spring from Ossian, the mythical third-century Irish bard to whom a cycle of boisterous, romantic tales is ascribed. He certainly descends from Homer's Odysseus, whose battle with the Cyclops and other adventures his own feats echo. Some of Hicks's tales are more roisterous and Rabelaisian than the ones that have been collected and published over the last few decades; the Jack tales were "cleaned up" for publication, Hicks says. Collectors like Richard Chase, whose compilation is a classic, "took the vulgarish out."

Hicks's own dialect, in which he tells the ancient tales, goes back two hundred years, he says, to the days of Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett. Some scholars call his dialect the purest example of the speech of the Scotch-Irish and English pioneers who settled southern Appalachia in the late seventeen-hundreds, bringing Jack with them. It's a speech that has preserved Chaucerian and Elizabethan locutions. "I don't know how it popped up in Daddy," one of Hicks's daughters says. "It come down through, I guess, and he got stuck with it. None of us got it. He has the dialogue that come over with the ships from Shakespeare's country." Appalachia, a by-place since the Revolution, has from time to time revealed pockets of antiquity. Cecil Sharp, the English folklorist and organizer of the English Folk Dance Society, travelled through Appalachia on muleback in 1916, and marvelled to find ballads long forgotten in the British Isles being sung in the mountains. "I'd like to build a wall around these mountains and let the mountain people alone. The only distinctive culture in America is here," he declared.

Once a year, in October, Ray Hicks travels sixty miles by chauffeured car across the Blue Ridges to the tiny town of Jonesboro, Tennessee, which since 1973 has held an annual storytelling festival. The Jonesboro festival was the first in the country, and though it now has dozens of imitators, it is the most prestigious. Jimmy Neil Smith, the founder and chairman of the festival, presides at the weekend-long jamboree.

"Hicks is the patriarch—the classic American storyteller," Smith says. "Storytelling is now a profession, growing out of the revival. Hicks has not in any way succumbed." The other stars spinning yarns under tents on Jonesboro's village green have agents, press kits, and year-round bookings at conventions and fairs. On the circuit, they earn from fifteen hundred to twenty-five hundred dollars an appearance. They sell records, tapes, and videos of their performances, and make enough to be respectable small businesses. Most learned their tales from anthologies and by doing research. Very few grew up in the oral tradition, like Hicks.

He usually tells an hour or two of tales at the festival, legs akimbo in a chair on a wooden stage, dressed in new bib overalls, a fresh shirt, brogans, and his "fedory," an Army camouflage cap cocked on his head and furled on one side. He goes home with two hundred dollars, the standard fee at Jonesboro. The most he has earned from his stories in one sitting is four hundred dollars. He performs only locally, at schools and small colleges in



"The chef did this on spec. Pay if you like it."

• •

southern Appalachia, and often in Banner Elk, the town nearest to the Beech. At his appearances, Rosa, his wife, a pretty, dainty woman, sells dried apple slices, flowers, and copies of his one record.

Wherever Hicks goes, he is mobbed. Children jump on him like dogs on a bone. "They come to see me act the fun out, set the place rocking!" he says. Hicks tells "unthoughted," as mountaineers say—spontaneously, without inhibitions. "I learnt not to plan my stories. That'll ruint you. I jest tell the one that hits my mind when I hit the mike," he explains. His face is his stage, round and full. His forehead rises and his chin recedes, and in between is a long dropsical nose. He slips out his false teeth, lowers his head, eyes shut, and shouts, "Jack and his mother was outta vittles, seein' it hard!" He screws up his face till his forehead nearly meets his chin. "Gosh, oh gosh," he whispers, eyes popping, the essence of impressionability, an overgrown Jack himself. His dialect, with its rhythmic repetitions and its archaisms, sways poetically, lulling his listeners. Suddenly, he rears up and laughs at the fix Jack is in. And he laughs and laughs at his own jokes—"There's three kinds of moonshine: the hugging kind, the kind that makes ya sing, and the kind that gives ya fifteen fights to a pint." As he tells, he hews the air with his hands, his overalls flapping on his spindleshanks, delighted with himself.

"Ray tells a story for the audience that's there, of course," says Jo Wilson, the director of the National Council for the Traditional Arts, "but he also tells it for the audience that isn't there—the kin who told him the story. And he has to do as good as they did. Ray constantly plays to an audience of superlative, departed storytellers."

WHEN Hicks was a child on the Beech, in the nineteen-twenties, stories were the only entertainment he knew. People in the mountains were too poor to buy toys, and the nearest large towns were too far to walk to, so parents amused children with stories during breaks from working in the fields and at night around the fire and at communal cornhuskings and log-rollings. These stories came down from Hicks's ancestors, the first white men in the mountains. "I learnt my Jack tales mostly from my dad's father, John Benjamin Hicks," he says. "My grandmother Julie told Indian, witch, and haint tales, too. I'd sit and pick the burrs out of the hanks as she spun, and listen. They was both well in speech."

Hicks has many tales of his own about the supernatural—mostly about encounters he has had while tromping over the Beech at night, carrying a lantern and a gun. "Now, this here is a true story with Ray," he says. "Along in the last of the thirties, I was 'bout seventeen, and we's without any food. Mama said to Dad, 'You better go pull some galax.' " He stops to explain that galax is an evergreen "sold for several moons back, holped the mountain people out from starvin'," and adds, "Hit took five thousand to git a dollar." The plant grows in profusion in the woods of Appalachia, and wholesale florists buy the round, shiny green leaves for floral arrangements and funeral wreaths. So, Hicks continues, he and his father and a friend packed the last of their food and some bedding for camping, and started off.

"We walked 'bout three miles up that rugged mountain—Dad, me, and that other boy I growed up with. We had a dog my Dad bought off a feller to train into a coon dog and see if he could make two or three dollars. The dog was mixed—half bulldog. Jest eat you up if he could git to you and you a stranger. We got thar to the spring by a big twin chestnut tree. It was dead. Lightning had struck it. We broke big slabs off it, holped Dad carry 'em, made a table, and got us some rocks for seats. We got the fire goin' to fix us some food. Put some taters in to roast and some coffee on to boil and laid out the biscuits to warm. Dad told me to tie the dog up the hill.

"Now hit's a-gettin' dusky dark, and I heard a voice. And in that mountain I wasn't 'spectin' to see no woman, 'specially a lady! Gosh! Hit panthers in it, cougars, black bears, a few timber rattlers that bit you and you's gone. She's a-comin' out of the dark, and I said, 'Hold it, whoever you are. I don't know you, a stranger here in these mountains, and I'm a-feared, a-wonderin' why would you be in the mountains by yourself.'

"Her hair was black as jet. Her black dress was torn in strings till her thighs

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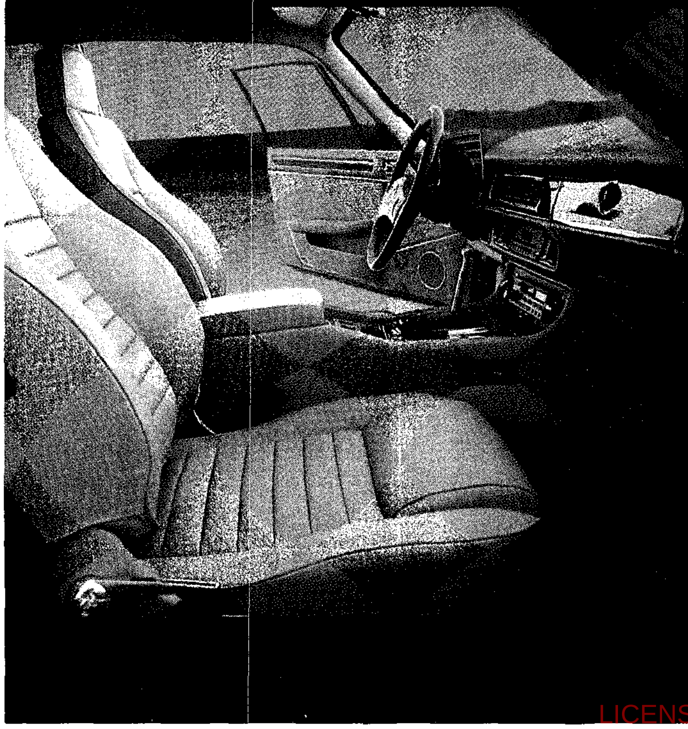

In 1951, Jaguar created the car that for many would define the concept of "grand touring"—the XK-120 fixed head coupe. This remarkable automobile combined the civilized comforts of a luxurious Jaguar sedan with extraordinary sports car performance.

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was a-showin' through. And she had on slippers with the soles loose. Flap, flap, flap, she come.

"I said, 'Don't go near that dog! Oh God, don't do that, whoever you are—he'll eat you up!' She jest went on in spite of me, motioned her hand two or three times over his head in a circle. And that dog fell down like he died, wagglin' his tail. 'Oh, no! You kilt our dog!' I said.

" 'No, I jest put him off to sleep,' she said. 'He won't bother nobody now. I'm hungry. Do you have anything to eat? I ain't had nothin' to eat in three days but three raw onions.'

" 'We got some taters, Ma'am, and you're welcome to 'em.'

" 'You're a fine young man,' she said, 'and you a-shy of other people. I'm goin' to put a little spell on you to holp you in your life so you can speak to people what time you got left.' That's why when I go a-tellin' stories people try to find out what kind of a mind I got. Why I tell stories jest that way.

"She come down and ate with us. We had beds, some quilt covers we took, and Dad told her, 'Now hit's dark. You make yourself at home. Stay by the fire till daylight so you can go home.'

"We was a-dozin', and my friend kept punchin' me. 'I lived to see a witch!' he whispered. 'I read it in my schoolbook whur they had it pictured and it said that there ain't none. But they is! If we go to sleep, she'll cut our throats and drink our blood.'

"I said, 'She won't have to do that. She could jest witch us and ruint us if she wanted.'

"Well, I'd wedged my matches under the bark of that old dead chestnut. Hit come a rain and our quilts was drippin' when we woke. Dad hollered for me to get a fire goin'. Hit was foggy and black. I felt with my hands around the camp, a-knowin' that witch was there. I found the matches and rubbed one through my hair to dry it. Then struck it on my buckle. I was a-doubtin' it, but hit struck.

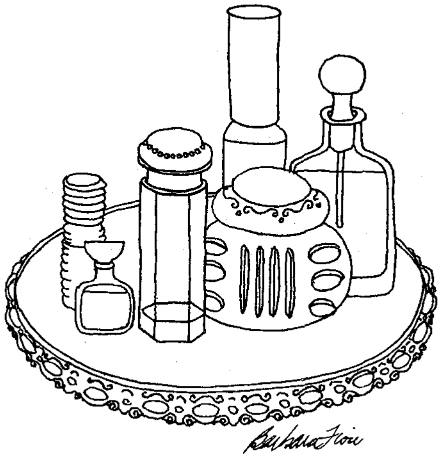
"That woman was gone! Now whur did she go in that storm? Lightning and thunder!"

Hicks winks broadly. "I got a little witch 'chantment on me. I never seed her agin, but I ain't been feared since to talk to nobody."

Apparitions, dire and marvellous, frequently appear to Hicks. Second sight runs in his family. "I seed the Holy Ghost Dove whiz by to a deathbed," he says. "Twice." He has seen ghosts burning in silhouette above buried treasure, "feet a-paddlin' in the air, 'bout sixteen inches off the ground." One evening, he flew around a room on a bed held up by an agitated ghost, never once hitting a wall. He cures warts with a touch and a carving he makes in a tree. (He can cure warts by mail, too.) He lets bees sting him—the venom eases his rheumatism. His body has so much electricity, he boasts, that fleas won't stay on him and watches won't run on him. Few know more about herb doctoring than he does. He can't stanch blood with the local cure—reciting a passage from Ezekiel over the wound—but that's just because the current practitioner is a man and, by tradition, he can pass the gift only to a woman. Some years ago, Hicks's pickup truck broke down and he had no money for repairs, so he prayed for help. That night, an illuminated detailed map of an internal-combustion engine appeared on the ceiling of his bedroom. Hicks studied it for an hour or so and got up and fixed the truck.

He got about in that truck, bumping over the dirt back roads, until he drove it off the mountain one winter day. It tumbled around and around as it fell down an icy pasture and landed on its side in a ravine. Hicks's back was fractured in several places, but he managed to crawl out of a half-open window and up the pasture and down the road, finally collapsing in a neighbor's yard. The doctors who treated him don't know how he did it; they say that the accident would have been the end of most men.

ONCE, under duress, Hicks left Appalachia. In 1983, a letter arrived from Washington, from the Folk Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, announcing that he had won an award for his storytelling. He was invited, along with sixteen other artists from various fields, to accept the award at a ceremony in the capital. The letter also said that the award carried a gift of five thousand dollars.



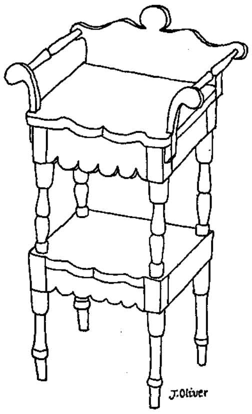
Hicks thought a bit, decided he didn't know these people, and threw the letter out. Meanwhile, Stanley Hicks, his double first cousin, who is another storyteller (and also a woodworker and an instrument-maker) and lives on the Tennessee line in the mountains, received a similar letter. Stanley looked into the matter and decided that it was for real. He drove over to the Beech to persuade Ray to go up to Washington with him, and failed. Only when a high-level delegation from Washington came down to talk to Ray in person did he relent: "I ain't never turned nobody down face to face."

In the capital, Ray Hicks met Vice-President George Bush and, at the awards ceremony, stunned the audience of fifteen hundred with the conclusion of "Whickety-Whack," in which Jack captures Death in a magic sack. Frank Hodsoll, the chairman of the N.E.A., couldn't get over the extraordinary star who stole the show. The award certificate now hangs on a wall in Hicks's home, beside a congratulatory letter from President Reagan. The award honors Hicks as a master traditional artist whose gift "has contributed to the shaping of our artistic traditions and to preserving the cultural diversity of the United States." "What I got it fer," says Hicks, "is a-savin' the culture, and me a poor person and seed it hard."

Hicks was miserable in Washington. "I ain't understandin' the words, a lot of 'em, what people said. To catch it takes me a while." He didn't like some of the food, and the air-conditioning aggravated his gout. He didn't like staying in a hotel. "I feel I's a-ruining the place. Rough as I am, it suffers me." Home again, Hicks vowed never to make another trip like that. In a mountain grocery, cutting hair to earn a few dollars while other men played rook, he told folks how he got caught in a revolving door in Washington. "And walked around for a day and a half," he said. "Stanley got in one, too. Ain't seed him since."

Bess Lomax Hawes, the director of

the Folk Arts Program, and the daughter of the folklorist John Lomax, says, "There isn't any other Ray and never has been another Ray, except, maybe, back in the Middle Ages. He moves into a story, and is totally engrossed. He talks about the characters as if they'd just stepped round back of his house, or gone up the road a piece. As far as I'm concerned, Ray Hicks walks out of the fairy tales." Her brother Alan Lomax, the eminent folk-music scholar, says, "Some of his stories are the finest ever told to folklorists in this country. He's a real natural novelist."



Television producers often ask Hicks to entertain on the air. NBC's "Sunday Today" show recently invited him to come to New York for a storytelling tête-à-tête with the monologuist Spalding Gray. Hicks, who doesn't have a telephone, gets such requests by Mailgram. He always refuses, the Washington journey fresh in his mind. Hicks did happily accommodate Robert MacNeil, of PBS. MacNeil and his crew climbed the mountain to him, for a short segment of MacNeil's series "The Story of English" about old-time American whites whose dialect is largely Scottish. The Jack tales that Hicks tells, MacNeil pointed out in the program, are very much like the ones that tinkers in the Scottish Lowlands tell. Alan Lomax also filmed Hicks, for an upcoming series on American folk culture. "All's know me, prutty fer around," Hicks says of his spreading fame. "I got movies in England and Holland and an'thur 'un in Ireland."

The parade of folklorists, filmmakers, linguists, tourists, students, and college professors, most of whom Hicks "don't know from diddley," settles on his porch. Its floorboards, patched with old license plates, give under the visitors' tread. He hitches up some chairs, shoos his dog off the sofa, and sits down. Then he slips out his teeth, rocks on his tailbone, and takes off. Or he leads folks into the parlor, a dark-green room with bare floors, an old stove, and two beds. He folds himself into his favorite chair, rolls a cigarette, and away he goes.

His loquacity amazes his visitors. Professors ask him if he was trained. "Na-oow," Hicks tells them. "I wasn't teached. That's the way I growed up a-talkin'." Hours later, Hicks is still going strong. Barbara Freeman, half of a duo of travelling storytellers called the Folktellers, is a good friend and frequent visitor. "While steam's rising from his lips," she says, "I say to Rosa, 'Rosa, help me, so I can leave!' And she'll tell Ray, 'Now, Ray, that's enough!' Then I can slip away." Hicks gives the matter some thought: "I could talk a week, yi. Might git a week a-fer I started back on the same thing." Sometimes when his family turned in for the night Hicks would pull up a chair by their beds and talk to them while they slept.

John Purvis, a businessman from Tarboro, North Carolina, who works for the Masonite Corporation, spent three hours listening to tales not long ago, with his wife and two daughters. He came across Ray while motorcycling in the mountains, and now he drops by regularly. "The Japanese recognized people like him a long time ago," Purvis says. "They designate them national treasures—those with special ancient crafts, like skilled swordsmen or weavers. Hicks is one of ours."

Beech Mountain is pristine country on Hicks's side. Behind his house is a glorious view. Forested mountains extend range after range, like ocean waves, into Tennessee and Virginia. On overcast days, the peaks amid the clouds turn all shades of iced violet.

The land is too steep for tractors. As a boy, Hicks plowed with oxen and mules. Some fields were so steep that earth fell down his collar. "I worked the last yoke of ox in this country," he says. "If you train 'em right, they're better than horses and mules. Jest flow. Squat on their legs, pull, beller, and mo-o-oan." Hicks was the fourth of ten children, each of whom got one pair of shoes a year. When the shoes wore out, the children went barefoot. "My feet got tough till I could mash a green chestnut burr," he says. To earn the shoes, Hicks pulled galax and fern, and shook ragweed tops into a dishpan, collecting pollen to sell to wholesale drug houses. He gathered bark, leaves, roots, and whole plants to sell—sassafras, witch hazel, and tanbark, and spignet, good for the kidneys. His father distilled wintergreen oil, and his mother hooked rugs to help feed the family, but a baby boy starved to death. Hicks recalls, "I was naked, frozen, seein' death every day."

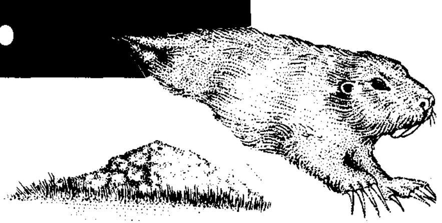
At fourteen, Hicks left school to make a living as a farmer. When he was twenty-two, his father hanged himself by Devil's Highway, a mountain road. A few years later, Hicks married Rosa Harmon, whom he'd spied in church. "I was jest goin' to hunt me a woman," Hicks says. Their five children helped them raise cabbages, potatoes, and onions. Hicks sold the crops in Valle Crucis, a hamlet at the foot of the Beech, to the Mast General Store. (Its slogan was "Everything from diapers to dynamite.")

Howard Mast, the third generation to run the store, says this of Hicks: "Mountain people was bashful. If they came to the store, and somebody in a suit of clothes, obviously higher society, was there, they would never want contact with them. They'd speak when spoken to. Ray never saw a stranger. He'd elaborate on a little simple subject, make it sound newsworthy. Hold 'em spellbound in that slow drawl of his."

A song changed Hicks's fortunes. Frank Proffitt, his brother-in-law, had played "Tom Dooley," a ballad about the 1866 murder of one Laura Foster, in Hicks's parlor for the folk-song collectors Anne and Frank Warner. Frank Warner adapted it, and his friend Alan Lomax published it. In 1958, the Kingston Trio recorded it. "Tom Dooley" made Proffitt famous. His record company, Folk Legacy Records, also recorded Hicks spinning a Jack tale, and soon Hicks was discovered. He gradually let the brush grow over his land, and, as he made money at storytelling, sold his cattle and the rest of the farm animals. His record, "Ray Hicks Tells Four Jack Tales," still sells several hundred copies a year.

But Hicks has kept his old-time ways. Rosa fetches springwater each morning and cooks on a wood-burning

THE SOUND EVERY GOPHER IN YOUR YARD HATES.



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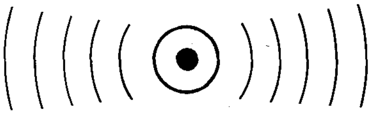

The sound moves out 50'in all directions.

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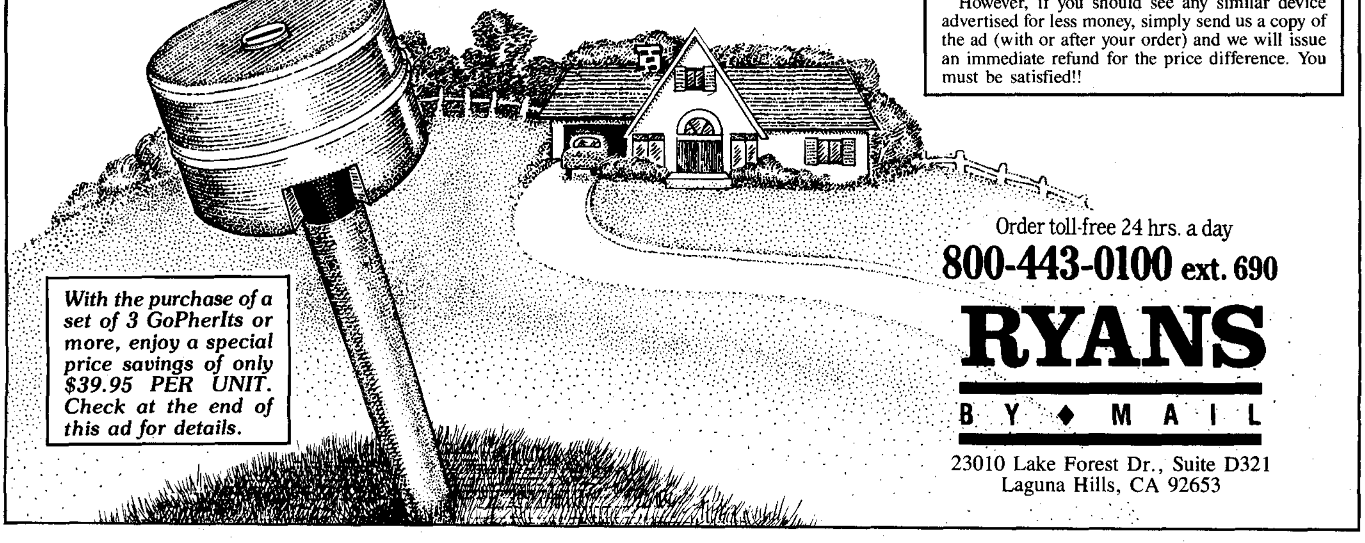

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stove. Except for a television set, a chain saw, and a secondhand icebox, Hicks has not changed anything in his house since his boyhood. He has a harmonica that he bought for fifteen cents at the Mast store in the first Roosevelt Administration, and he keeps it in the box it came in. With his son Ted, a stout, bearded man of thirty-four, who is the last of his children at home, Hicks harvests his woods when he needs money. He gathers log moss and galax, and twines white pine, balsam, and boxwood clippings into ropes to be trucked north at Christmastime. In witch-hazel season, his yard is knee-deep in cuttings.

Few storekeepers in Valle Crucis or Banner Elk have seen Rosa. "She don't come out," they say. Actually, Rosa does occasionally stir into the "beyond," as the Hicks family calls the world off the Beech. She worships at the local Methodist church, and she accompanies her husband on his yearly trip to Jonesboro.

Hicks stumps up to the microphone there. "Do you want to hear a Jack tale?" he shouts.

The crowd cheers.

"Do ya want to hear 'Lucky and Unlucky Jack'?"

"Yeah!"

"Unlucky Jack was out a-huntin' fer a job," Hicks begins. "Finally ran on this feller who said, 'Yi, I'm a-needin' a man to herd sheep.' So Unlucky Jack fill out a contract that the first 'un to get t'other mad was to put him across a barrel and whip him and take enough hide outta his back to make a pair of shoestrings. Unlucky Jack, he couldn't read no good and he didn't know what the man had wrote on the contract 'bout givin' him no supper.

"Next morning, the man hollered, 'Git up, Jack! Your sheep's ready.' Unlucky Jack got up and tuk a hundred head of sheep out, grazed 'em, and come back in. And the feller counted 'em and said, 'You have ninety-nine and one is a hundred. You ain't lost any.' Went in and sat down and wasn't goin' to give him anythin' to eat. Jest said directly, 'Your bed's ready.'

"So Unlucky Jack slept, and next morning tuk 'em sheep out and grazed 'em, brought 'em back and put 'em in, and the man said, 'Ninety-nine and one is a hundred. They's all in.' Sat around and just said, 'Your bed's ready.'

"Tuk 'em out the third day, and he's gettin' awful weak, herded 'em, come in, counted 'em, 'Ninety-nine and one is a hundred, they's all here.' Said, 'Your bed's ready.' 'Bed's ready? Ain't you goin' to give me nothin' to eat?' The feller said, 'No, it ain't in the contract to give you nothin' to eat. Is you mad?'

"Unlucky Jack said, 'I'm mad and good and mad.'

"So the feller laid him across that barrel and whipped him and poured salt in the gashes. And then cut out hide enough outta his back for a pair of shoestrings. Unlucky Jack crawled off, tryin' to get home.

"Lucky Jack happened to be a-walkin' along and seed the blood. He got down and smelt o' hit and said, 'That's human blood.' He tracked the blood, kept trackin' down through the woods, and there lay Unlucky Jack, unconscious and bleedin'. So Lucky Jack bathed him in cold water, healed him up, kinda. Got him to whur he could talk. Lucky Jack said, 'Who done this?' And Unlucky Jack said, 'Feller back yander. I made a contract herdin' sheep, didn't know what it said in hit, and hit's fixed that the first to get t'other mad would whip him and cut enough hide outta him to make a pair of shoestrings. I got mad the third day.'

"Lucky Jack tuk him to a doctor. Said, 'If you can cure this man, I'll be by to pick him up.' So he left him and come to that feller's farm. That man's wife said, 'Look over yander. Here comes another sucker! Here comes another sucker!' "

Hicks breaks off to make an aside to the audience: "Suckers, them's fools,

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you know. That's what they call 'em in the mountains—suckers. Didn't know that the evil 'uns could suck you under and git you to work fer nothin'. "

Picking up his story again, he says, "So Lucky Jack signed the contract to herd sheep, and sat around there and the man said, 'Jack, your bed's ready.' Atter the feller and his wife went to sleep, Jack got up and slipped down to the kitchen and got him some corn bread and salt.

"Next morning, the feller said, 'Your sheep's ready.' So Jack he got down and carried out a hundred head and tuk 'em to the field. Jest as quick, he knocked out a good yearlin' ewe, a fat 'un, built him a fire, skinned him out a piece of the ham, and ate hit with that salt and corn bread, and was a-feelin' good. Went back in and counted them. 'Ah, ninety-nine is all they is. One's gone,' the man said. 'Yeah, I lost one,' Lucky Jack said. 'Is you mad?'

"The feller said, 'No, one ain't too bad.'

"So they got his bed ready, and he went up and got him some corn bread and salt, counted out ninety-nine sheep next morning, picked out a female, killed hit, and cooked hit, left most for the coyotes to eat. Tuk 'em back. The man counted 'em and said, 'Oh, you lost an'thur 'un.'

"Lucky Jack said, 'Yeah, I lost an'thur 'un. Is you mad?'

" 'No, two isn't so bad.'

"Next day, Lucky Jack knocked the best one out. Ate it with the bread and salt, went back in, and said, 'Ooh, it's just ninety-seven. Well, are you mad?'

" 'No,' says the man. 'I ain't mad, but maybe you'd be better a-plowin'. Can you plow?'

" 'Yi. I can plow pretty good.'

"The man had a big, fine team o' horses, and he tuk Lucky Jack out to a big field, started him a-plowin', and went back to the house. Jack jest unhooked the bridle rings and let the team plow whichever way they went. It looked like an old sow hog been rootin' there."

Hicks heaves back, closes his eyes, and lowers his head, leaving his expectant audience temporarily in limbo.

A Scotsman in the audience whispers to his companion, "I've heard about Jack, I've thought about Jack, and today I've finally seen Jack."

After what Hicks thinks is a proper interval, he resumes: "So the feller come back to see how Lucky Jack's gettin' along and said, 'I ain't mad, but maybe you jest need to be showed again.' So he showed Lucky Jack and left.

"This time, there come a man with a little ole pore donkey and a saddle on it. Lucky Jack said, 'Hey, man! I'd like to have your donkey!'

"The feller huffed, 'You makin' fun o' my donkey?'

"Jack said, 'I ain't makin' fun. Would you swap it for one of these horses?'

" 'You mean swap one of them for my pore little ole donkey? Yi, God, yes, if you want to swap!'

"So Lucky Jack tuk a big horse out of the body strop, lengthened the body strop, and got the donkey saddle tight on the big horse. And the little ole man went off on that big fine horse, a-smilin'. Jack put the donkey 'side of the horse, with the big horse's harness, so the two would pull a double tree. That shot the little ole donkey's butt up Jack's nose. Jack'd push hit off and whup the donkey, and directly he cut the reins to it, and knocked the donkey dead, and hooked it up to that big horse, and was a-draggin' it out over the field to save buryin' it, when the man come to see how things was goin', and when he seed he said, 'Oh, my God! Where's my horse at?'

"Lucky Jack said, 'I thought you'd be tickled with this little ole donkey. I swapped hit even.'

" 'God, man! Swapped hit even?'

" 'It wasn't pullin', and I knocked hit in the head, and was draggin' hit over the field here to haul your ground with.'

"The feller said, 'Oh, my gosh, Jack.'

"Lucky Jack said, 'Are you mad?'

"He said, 'No, I ain't mad. But you might be better at pickin' apples. Can you pick apples?' "

Hicks waits for the laughter from the audience to subside, then says, "So he put Lucky Jack up to a-pickin' apples in his orchard and went off. It was so hard a-climbin' that ladder that Lucky Jack ran down to the woodshed and got him a poleaxe. He went back and had three big apple trees a-cut down, a-pickin' 'em on the ground. The feller come down to check on him, and said, 'Oh, my God, cuttin' down my apple trees! I won't have none next year! Maybe you jest don't know how to pick.' So he throwed the ladder up to show him how, and Lucky Jack jerked the ladder out from under him. And when he was a-hangin' by one hand, yellin', 'Hoo! Hoo! Put the ladder back up, I'm a-gonna fall,' Lucky Jack said, 'I'll put it back whenever you holler and tell you wife to fix me something to eat.'

" 'You run tell her that right quick. I can't hang here too long, I'll fall! Be kilt!'

"So Lucky Jack ran down to the wife. Said, 'Your husband up there a-hangin' on that apple tree said fer you to kiss me.'

"She said, 'Oo-oo-oo, I ain't a-goin' to do it!'

"The husband couldn't hear what she said, and hollered, 'You do it or I'll kill you if I git down from here.'

"So she kissed him, and Lucky Jack run back and set the ladder under him and let him down. The feller went back, and his wife said, 'You duckhead, you. I wouldn't a-kissed that thing for no money.'

"He said, 'You mean you kissed him?'

"She said, 'Yeah. You said fer me to. You hollered you'd kill me if I didn't.'

"That feller laid into Jack, and hit was whippetty cut. For a minute, hit looked like he was going to git Jack. But Jack was thin and quick as a cat, and outwinded him, Lucky Jack did, and whipped him, put him across that barrel, put salt in the gashes, and cut the same hide outta his back as he could remember came out of Unlucky Jack's back.

"Went to the doctor's. Said he didn't have no money and he'd work it out and come back. The two Jacks got a-walkin', and Lucky Jack jest reached into his pocket and said, 'Here, Unlucky Jack, I wound him. Here's the hide off his back like he tuk outta yours.'

"And that's the end of the Unlucky and Lucky Jack tale." Hicks spits into a cuspidor beside him.

The audience gives Hicks a standing ovation. Rosa gets up, and Hicks, one hand in hers, waves to the crowd. Rosa says, "Thank you, all you good folks. I'm gonna take this ol' blabbermouth home now."

The crowd roars.

Hicks, departing, shouts, "And the last time I saw 'em Jacks, they was a-doin' good!" —GWEN KINKEAD

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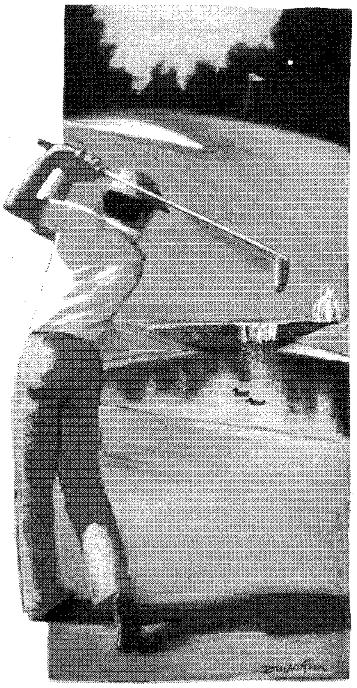

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LETTER FROM ALEXANDRIA

IN the Greco-Roman Museum of Alexandria last April, an Egyptian acquaintance and I were admiring a marble head said to be that of Cleopatra. The chin, the forehead, the lips etched in unmistakable curves of power, the severe expression discredited the conventional notion of Cleopatra's great beauty. As we were discussing this, a guard suddenly rushed in and ordered us out. The museum was closing, he said. It was a few minutes before eleven on a Friday morning. My acquaintance, an architect named Abdul Rahman, who had brought me to the museum less than an hour before, was surprised. "What on earth has happened?" Rahman demanded, perhaps a little too sharply. "We have only just come in."

The guard answered in equally irritated tones. Pointing to his wristwatch, he said that the museum was closing because the employees were entitled to attend Friday prayers. "It is their right," he added. He sounded a little like a shop steward citing an industry-union agreement.

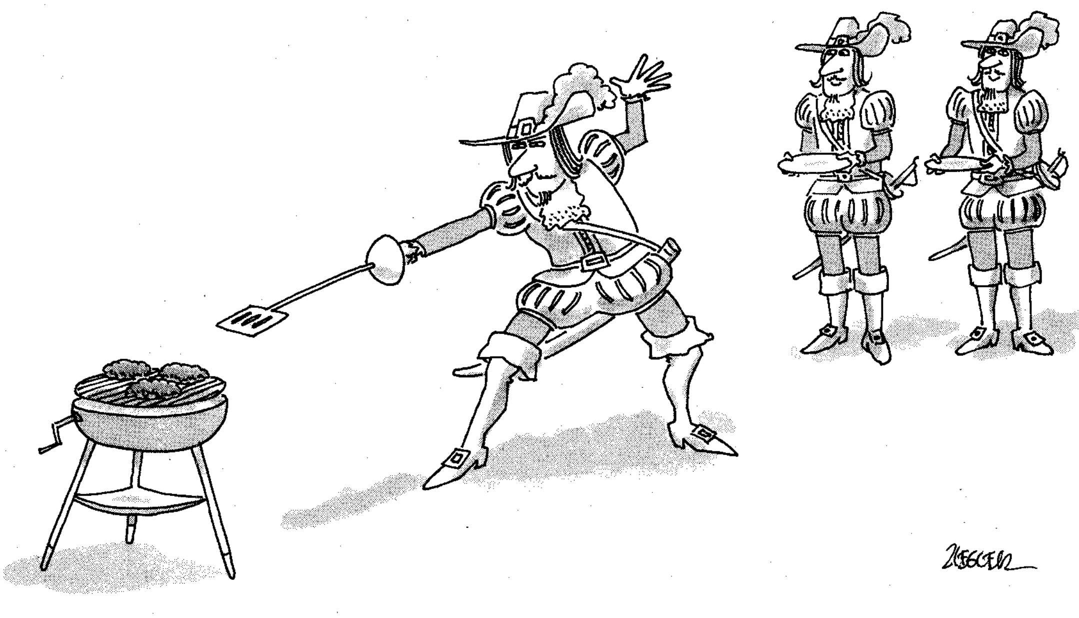
"Since when?" asked Rahman, a Muslim, who had not been to the museum for some time. By now, the head guard had joined us, having shepherded a few tourists from a nearby room, where the chief attraction was the mummy of a crocodile stretched out on a wooden bed.

"For some years," the head guard said. "I'm surprised that you did not know." He added that he was very sorry for the inconvenience—we should have been told earlier—and he assured us that if we cared to come back at 2 P.M. our tickets would be revalidated.

I said that I very much wanted to return. The museum was small but was filled with interesting works, including a roomful of exquisitely painted Hellenistic figurines that reflected daily life and fashion under the Ptolemies; they alone would have been well worth a trip to Alexandria. The museum was built in 1895, by Italian architects, along vaguely classical lines. The founders and first patrons were rich cotton barons—Alexandria has long been the center for Egypt's cotton trade—and other members of the city's then very sizable European community, comprising Greek, Italian, French, British, Spanish, and Maltese landowners, bankers, shipping agents and other *commerçants*, doctors, and hoteliers. (Before President Gamal Abdel Nasser mortgaged most of Egyptian cotton production to the Soviet Union, in the late nineteen-fifties, cotton was the main cash crop of Alexandria. A third of all the arable land in Egypt was given over to it, and Alexandria supplied between six per cent and eight per cent of the world's needs.) "One of the first directors of this museum was an Italian named Breccia," Rahman said as we walked toward the exit. "His niece married my great-uncle. Alexandria was cosmopolitan then. Alexandrians of a certain class were open-minded. Many spoke four or five languages fluently. The city was not Greek or Italian or Arab or Egyptian. It was a hybrid. We would not have been turned out on a Friday morning then. Even under Nasser this would not have happened. Nasser was xenophobic—he threw out the foreigners and ruined the economy—but he did not force religion on you."

As we walked down the museum steps, squinting in the bright sun, we noticed that the small square below had undergone a dramatic change. An hour earlier, it had been clogged with traffic. Cars and carts had barely moved through clouds of dust and exhaust fumes. Now it was a peaceful expanse laid out with prayer mats. Parts of it were shaded against the sun by canvas sheets tied with ropes to impromptu masts. Three or four hundred men were crouched on the ground, waiting for a prayer service to begin. It was not the only improvised open-air mosque in Alexandria that morning. In the crowded downtown area, straw mats were laid out in empty lots and in narrow spaces between houses. Here and there, entire streets were blocked—rather provocatively, Rahman said, adding that there was nothing like this in Cairo—and men bowed in prayer between the crumbling, peeling façades of former palatial homes that now serve as nationalized local banks and Egyptian government offices.

"This is how things are in today's Egypt," Rahman said. "Not enough mosques." I remembered that in the nineteenth century Edward Lane, in his now classic "An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians," had noted that the great mosques of Egypt were rarely crowded, and even on Fridays were only partly filled. "Hundreds of mosques have been built in recent years," Rahman said, "but there are still not nearly enough." Or else there are too many Egyptians. One recent estimate is fifty-two million—more than double the population in 1960. Most government efforts



to curtail population growth have been relatively unsuccessful, and if the growth continues at the present rate, of a million a year, there will be close to sixty-four million Egyptians by the end of the century. The more the population grows, the stronger seems the Islamic revival. "It all started under Sadat," said Rahman. Anwar Sadat used to say that he was an Islamic President, of an Islamic people, in an Islamic land. At other times, he would ridicule the fundamentalists as a gang of fools or would attack them as a seditious minority of Communists, masking their true faces behind pious beards. Shortly before his death, he tried to stem the fundamentalist tide by ordering mass arrests. Since his assassination, by Islamic fanatics, the fundamentalists' influence has continued to grow, at all levels—notably in the universities and among the professions. The fundamentalists now control the major student unions. Three major professional associations—the engineers', the doctors', and the pharmacists'—are dominated by them. The fundamentalists are said to be especially strong in the city of Alexandria. As early as 1980, fundamentalist students at Alexandria University demanded that the sexes be separated in classrooms and cafeterias. Their demand was granted. I was told that at a recent mass rally at the university the fundamentalists protested the teaching of all foreign languages. Incredibly, even in the faculties of science and medicine there are hundreds of bearded male and veiled female students, whose religion forbids the males a glimpse of a naked female body. A concert on campus was recently cancelled under pressure from fundamentalist professors and students, who claimed that music—all music—was pagan debauchery. The fundamentalists claim that modern Egypt is corrupt—a huge whorehouse. Its public institutions are paralyzed by embezzlers. The only cure for these evils, they say, is a return to the pristine purity of Islam, and a halt to modern education, to industrialization, and to Westernization, with its dangerous by-products of moral lassitude and permissiveness.

WE drove back from the museum along the Corniche, Alexandria's magnificent sea esplanade. The beaches here still bear names that were given them in a different era—Stanley, Camp de César, Glymenopoulo, Sporting, San Stefano, Cleopatra, Côte d'Azur. Today, women are expected to wear extremely modest bathing suits. "Many of the women go into the water fully clothed," Rahman said. We stopped at a café on Stanley Beach. A few missile boats were moored in the bay. Behind us rose a long wall of high apartment buildings—the summer homes of rich Cairenes, empty at this time of the year. It is common to find little mosques in the basements of many of the new luxury establishments. (Mosques are exempt from taxation; having a mosque in the basement protects the builders from the taxman as well as from any fundamentalists who might riot against ostentatious luxury and "materialism.") Immediately behind the new apartment houses, wooden shacks and other slum dwellings lined narrow, labyrinthine unpaved lanes. Half-naked children played in the dust. Some looked less than ten years old, but their faces seemed to reflect twenty years of misery and deprivation. "You think *this* is poverty?" said Rahman. "They are relatively well-off. The *really* poor live in the garbage dumps and the mud hovels in the outskirts." He remembered Stanley Beach from his childhood, when there was nothing here but the luxurious villas of the cotton pashas, standing far apart in the fields.

A waiter came and we ordered beer. He hesitated for a moment, then launched into a long explanation, which Rahman translated. The waiter was saying that until a short time ago beer was still served at this café. It was a well-known establishment—actors and writers from Cairo stopped here during the summer months. The waiter himself was absolutely in favor of serving every patron what he wanted; it was wrong to compel anyone to observe religious customs against his will. But he was only a waiter. The café's owner, he said, had recently made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and while there he had vowed never again to serve alcohol in his café. "We are becoming fewer and fewer," Rahman said to me.

OF the ancient Greek Alexandria little survives but the name; the Arabs call it Iskandariyah. Other than Pompey's Pillar (erroneously so called

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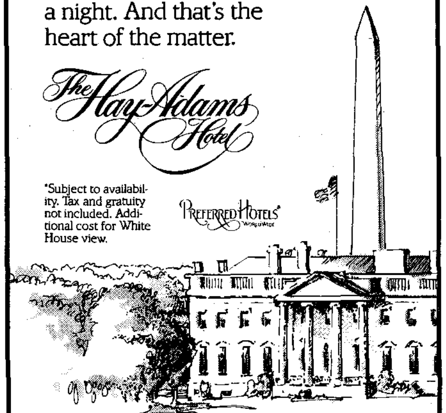

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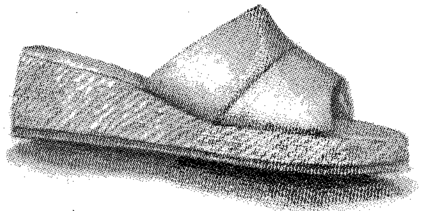

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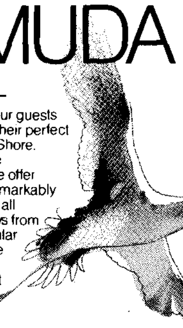

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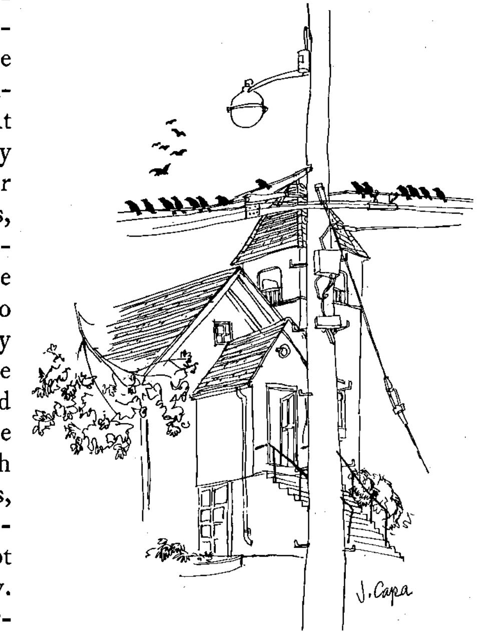
by the Crusaders—it was erected in honor of the Emperor Diocletian), which E. M. Forster thought an "imposing but ungraceful object," and a charming Roman amphitheatre, there are few archeological remains. Precisely because there is so little to see, I found Forster's "Alexandria: A History and a Guide," extraordinarily evocative. It was published in 1922 by the Alexandria branch of an English printer. Long unavailable, it has recently been reissued, in England by Michael Haag, Ltd., and in the United States by the Oxford University Press.

Alexandria was the New York of the ancient world; it was the first world city, enormously rich—"the greatest emporium in the inhabited world," Strabo claimed. Like Manhattan, it was bordered by water and its streets were laid out in unvarying straight lines intersected by stately avenues. It, too, was the meeting and melting point of diverse races, languages, cultures, and religions, and was the city with the largest Jewish population in the world. The Diaspora started here long before the fall of Jerusalem. In Alexandria, the legend of Egypt was recast in a fusion of Eastern mysticism with the clear, cool reason of Hellas; of Jerusalem with Athens.

For more than three centuries, Alexandria was the most learned place on earth. Here man first surmised that the earth was round and revolved around the sun. The great library is reported to have contained four hundred thousand scrolls. It no longer existed in 641, when the Arab conqueror Amr took Alexandria. The city yielded to Amr almost without a struggle—perhaps because it "had no soul," as Forster thought, or perhaps because of the decadence of which the name "Alexandria" has often been emblematic. At that time, according to a contemporary chronicle, Alexandria *still* had four thousand palaces, four thousand baths, four hundred theatres, and forty thousand poll-tax-paying Jews. There are too many fours in this account for us to take the numbers literally, but the city was undoubtedly populous. Under the Arabs, it declined, and Napoleon found only a simple fishing village here. The modern city was built in the nineteenth century, by European entrepreneurs, who controlled most of Egypt's industry and commerce and were exempt from taxation and from Egyptian law.

All this, and much more, is in Forster's book—a minor classic, which continues to be of great practical use. Forster constructs an immense "ghost city." He takes us wandering through the modern streets, imagining the ancient avenues. He allows us to look at old maps and urges us to study the texts of ancient or modern authors, among them Shakespeare, Dryden, Callimachus, and Plutarch. During the First World War, Forster spent three years in Alexandria as a medical orderly. He struck up a friendship with Constantine Cavafy, "the great Greek poet who so poignantly conveys the civilisation of his chosen city." For Cavafy, Alexandria was a city of anti-heroes: ambiguous, indolent, decadent, forever fin-de-siècle. The first English translation of one of Cavafy's best-known poems, "The God Abandons Antony," first appeared in Forster's book, sandwiched between its two halves, the "History" and the "Guide." The former evokes, in the form of a pageant, and at times whimsically, the city's main epochs. It is full of fine character sketches and takes pains to offend nearly all national and religious susceptibilities. Throughout, the novelist's eye is alive to texture and to the telling detail. The book begins with the towering figure of the Macedonian conqueror who founded the city, and ends with the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, an event that Forster deplored. In between, there are short sections on the strange dynasty of the Ptolemies (their incestuous marriages constituted "pride of race carried to an extreme degree"), on the librarians of Alexandria, on the poets, the astronomers, and the Church fathers (like Gibbon, Forster regarded Christianity as a major catastrophe), on Amr (a "sensitive and generous soul," yet Islam "swept the city physically and spiritually into the sea"), and on Napoleon ("The expedition failed but its memory remained with him: he had touched the East, the nursery of kings"). Forster's theme is the eclectic blending of cultures. In Alexandria, the proto-cosmopolis, the eyes strained away from Africa to Greece, Italy, and France.



ONE afternoon, a local acquaintance drove me out to the quarter of old Alexandria called Bacos, where Gamal Abdel Nasser was born, the son of a local postmaster who lived on an unpaved street. Most streets here are unpaved or are full of potholes, and the cars plow through dust. Open sewers run through some of the alleys. Outside a mosque, a radical mullah was addressing a large crowd. He was speaking through a megaphone about holy Islam and wicked Europe and America, about evil Communists and Jews, about justice, revolution, purity, corruption, sin, and redemption. The crowd, of several thousand, squatted on the ground, following the sermon with rapt attention. From time to time, backs were bowed in prayers that were like military drills. The crowd was hushed. There was something remarkable about the hush. The discipline was nearly absolute. In Egypt, people rarely form a queue, and, though good-natured, are always rather disorderly, shouting, and jostling one another. At this meeting, they answered the mullah's entreaties with clockwork precision. I was told that there had been a food riot here the week before and the police had made several arrests. There were no police in sight that afternoon. After an hour or so, the mullah disappeared inside the mosque, and the crowd dispersed in perfect order. "He has changed my life," one of the worshippers told my acquaintance. The worshipper looked transported.

IN each section of the "History," Forster refers the reader to specific pages in the "Guide." The reader moves back and forth constantly between past and present, between the ephemeral and the concrete. Thus, in the section on Arianism—a theological doctrine that produced a violent debate in Alexandria in the fourth century (is Christ of a substance like but inferior to that of God the Father, as Arius held, or of the same substance, which was Athanasius's view?)—he sends the reader to the "Guide" to look at a picture of the Council of Nicaea, which declared Arianism anathema. And in the section on Alexander he bids the reader find Alexander's portrait on a magnificent coin in the Greco-Roman Museum, and then go to a busy street corner in downtown Alexandria where Alexander is said to have been buried in a glass sarcophagus, under what is now a modern mosque. Michael Haag, in his footnotes to this edition of Forster's book, leads the reader from here to the nearby Rue Sharm el Sheikh, the former Rue Lepsius. Forster knew it well. On the second floor of No. 10, in what is now the Pension Amir, a seedy little boarding house, Cavafy lived for twenty-five years before his death, in 1933—the period of his poetic maturity. Here, in 1907, Mr. Haag writes, "the literary apotheosis of Alexandria began." Downstairs was a brothel. Opposite was a hospital. Around the corner was a Greek Orthodox church. Cavafy used to say, "Where could I live better? Below, the brothel caters to the flesh. And there is the church which forgives sin. And there is the hospital where we die."

The little streets in this part of the city, which is almost completely rundown, housed most of the baroque characters in Lawrence Durrell's "Alexandria Quartet": Justine, the classical Jewess of neurology; the timid schoolteacher Darley; the rich Copt Nessim; and Clea and Balthazar. (The last character seems to have been based on Cavafy: he has a similar penchant for the Hellenistic past, and for degrading homosexual affairs.) A note in "Justine" assures the reader that the characters are invented but that "the city is real." I now wonder about that. When I reread the "Quartet," in Alexandria, it seemed perilously close to a conventional Victorian fantasy of the East as a place of exotic escape and sexual license, and of Alexandria as an incestuous, androgynous Eden, where, as Durrell wrote in "Justine," the "sexual provender" at hand was "staggering in its variety and profusion," and where there were "more than five sexes," whatever that means. (The English language could not tell them apart, he wrote; apparently, "only demotic Greek" could.) For Durrell, Alexandria was a backdrop: "clangs of the trams shuddering in their metal veins as they pierce the iodine-colored *meidan* of Mazarita," and "streets that run back from the docks . . . breathing into each others' mouths, keeling over." Or, more lurid, "shuttered balconies swarming with rats, and old women whose hair is full of the blood of ticks." One has to see Alexandria to realize that in the "Quartet" Durrell drew an inner landscape—his own.

IN Forster's day and in Durrell's day, as throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Alexandria was often described as a "European" city, more akin to Marseilles or Genoa than to nearby Cairo. How this myth was born should make a fascinating chapter in the archeology of knowledge. The ratio of Egyptians to Europeans was always at least four to one, but in the eyes of many European travellers the Arabs of Alexandria

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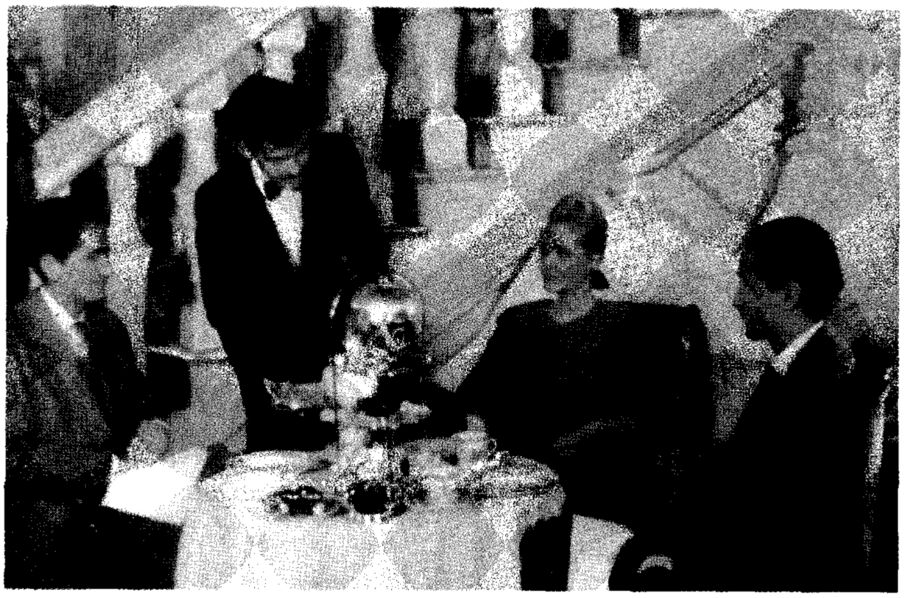
tended to disappear. In 1844, Thackeray landed at Alexandria ready to yield to the mysteries of the East. He had braced himself overnight with "the help of a cigar and a moonlight contemplation on deck," only to find a city more like Portsmouth, he thought—full of clean-shaven, buxom merchants, as trim and fat as those on the Paris Bourse, and of polite European places of resort, where one got ices and the French papers. Flaubert stopped at Alexandria in 1850 on his way to Jerusalem (which he thought revolting). He wrote, "*Alexandrie . . . est presque un pays européen, tant il y a d'européens*" ("Alexandria is almost a European country, there are so many Europeans"). There could not have been more than two thousand Europeans in Alexandria at that time—most of them Greeks and Italians—in a population of sixty or eighty thousand Egyptians, Syrians, Libyans, and Sudanese. For Cavafy, Alexandria was a mythical land populated almost exclusively by ancient and modern Greeks. The Europeans' wealth and importance were undoubtedly huge, and out of all proportion to their numbers. Their engineers had laid out the heart of the modern city (the present downtown area) along European lines, with parks, some of which have since disappeared, and with a fine sea promenade and a central square, the Place des Consuls, which still exist. The square was later renamed Place Mohammed Ali, after the Albanian founder of modern Egypt. Most Alexandrians have never used either name. They still call it Menschieh, after a police station that once stood there.

At the end of the last century, Alexandria was virtually a British port, according to James Morris in "Pax Britannica: The Climax of an Empire." The green Egyptian flag flew over the harbor, but the harbor was run by British officers in tarbooshes. Most of the steamer traffic that was cleared there was British. The trains were British and the trams always looked freshly painted. The telephone service, which today is highly erratic, had been installed by the Swiss and was then the envy of visiting Europeans. In 1905, the "brilliant narrowness" of Rue Chérif Pasha (today a warren of shabby shops selling drygoods and badly made shoes) reminded Ronald Storrs, a young Englishman, of London's Bond Street. Forster gently mocked the



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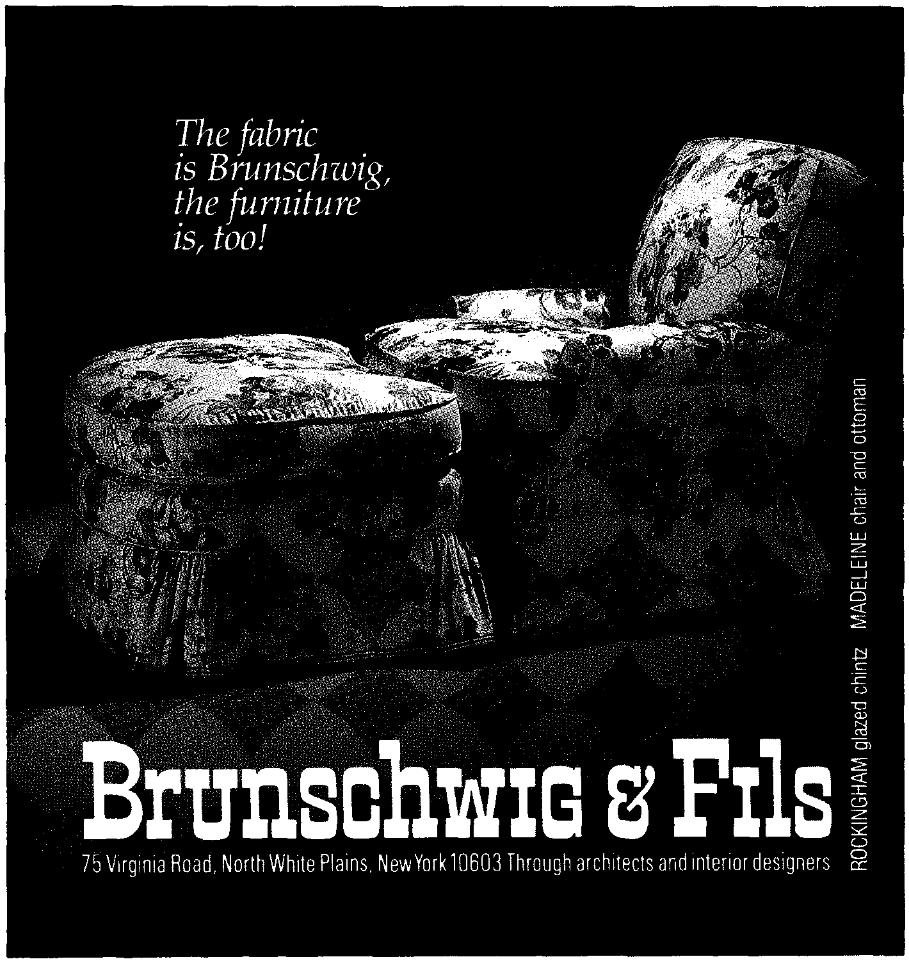
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promenade of "eternally well-dressed people," presumably European or Levantine, driving back and forth on the Rue Rosette, the ancient Canopic road, lined with smart shops selling Parisian clothes; in ancient days, it had had marble colonnades along it, connecting the two gates at opposite ends of the city—the Gate of the Sun and the Gate of the Moon.

The total population of Alexandria at the end of the First World War, when Forster completed his stay there, is generally given as about half a million. Estimates of the number of European nationals among that half million vary greatly—from eighty thousand to a hundred and fifty thousand. It is said that perhaps as many as two-thirds of the Europeans were second- and third-generation Greek immigrants, with the rest Italians, French, British, Maltese, Rumanians, Spaniards, Germans, Hungarians, and White Russians. Some were an impressive combination, among them Captain Jorge y Nelken-Waldberg, the author of "Mes Mémoires en Égypte," which is a mine of anecdotal information on fin-de-siècle Egypt. Waldberg was a Rumanian with a Swedish-Spanish name, United States citizenship, and a commission in the Argentine Army, who edited the local French newspaper. He was born Jewish, but was a dignitary of the Alexandria Greek Orthodox Church.

Most Alexandrian Jews were of Levantine origin—the Baron de Menasce, for example (ennobled by the Austrian Kaiser after he paid a visit to the Near East), or the clans of Abdallah Levi and Ibrahim Valensi Pasha. Joseph de Picciotto Bey was a member of the Egyptian Senate. Contrary to a widespread myth, fewer than half the Jews were foreign nationals; the rest were Egyptian citizens or were stateless.

Although the richest foreigners were cotton brokers, landowners, shipping agents, importers of machinery, and hoteliers, there were many foreign artisans and small shopkeepers, too. The expatriates were often extremely patriotic about their "old countries." Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy, was born in Alexandria, and so was Giuseppe Ungaretti, the Italian poet of the First World War. During the First Balkan War of 1912-13, the Greek community of Alexandria presented the old country with two fully equipped battleships. Other Alexandrian Greeks financed the construction of the huge Athens stadium, covered entirely in marble. The Comédie Française performed regularly in Alexandria. In addition, Alexandria boasted a symphony orchestra and an opera house. In the gracious little theatre of Zizinia (today a cinema), there were nightly performances, during the season, of such operas as "Tosca," "La Bohème," and "Lohengrin" (the severest form of Wagner then acceptable south of Naples).

The various foreign communities lived on terms of cordial antipathy. Intermarriage was rare except at the very highest or the very lowest social levels. Cavafy probably never entered an Egyptian home in his life, according to Robert Liddell, his biographer, and spoke Greek with a faint English accent. He spoke almost no Arabic. Very few Europeans spoke Arabic, and when they did, I was once told by an Alexandrian woman now living in Athens, it was "only in the imperative." Life in Alexandria, she recalled,

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was easy and, above all, *confortable*. She remembered households where four or more servants were employed merely to do the ironing.

Several former Alexandrians have published memoirs or autobiographical novels in recent years. All stress the identity crisis that marked their sheltered but schizophrenic adolescence in Alexandria before the Second World War. They spoke French at home, and yet they were not French. They went to an English school (the posh Victoria College of Alexandria was patterned after Eton), and yet they were not English. Rachel Maccabi, a former Alexandrian who published a memoir a few years ago in Israel, entitled "Mizraim Sheli" ("My Egypt"), recalls her youth in an upper-middle-class villa (today the Banque de Misr) on the Rue Rosette, surrounded by Sudanese manservants, Egyptian parlor maids, Italian cooks, a chauffeur, and an English nanny. There were endless bridge parties, annual trips by luxury liner to Europe, and an overwhelming bourgeois ennui, which she finally escaped, in 1938, by running away to a kibbutz in what was then Palestine. The author's mother, "like all ladies, young and old," would travel to Cairo once a year to visit with the queen, who was as European as her visitors. (She was a great-granddaughter of one of Napoleon's generals.) The author's father, an engineer, was a native of Cairo but a Hungarian citizen, and would pay a similar annual visit to King Fuad I. "He too was a masqueraded Egyptian," Maccabi writes of the King. "The kingdom of Egypt was for them a profitable business." Families like the Maccabis, though they had lived in Egypt for generations, were almost totally isolated, socially and culturally, from their Egyptian environment. Directly opposite the Maccabi house, a few steps led up "a narrow, dark passageway to a seedy Arab quarter," she writes. "It is odd, but I never climbed those steps." The Arabs of Alexandria were "faceless men, dark-skinned, dim-eyed," crouched on low stools or on the ground, and "women with veiled faces." Throughout this moving, tense text the reader has a feeling that a time bomb is ticking away. It explodes unexpectedly. The author describes "an elderly man of great dignity" who had been a servant in the house for twenty-five years. He becomes an accomplice in the brutal assassination of her father.

Alexandria at that time was the "summer capital" of Egypt. The King, his entire court, and his ministers and under-secretaries moved to Alexandria for the whole summer, along with the diplomatic corps and "society." Suites of rooms were taken for offices in the cavernous Hotel San Stefano, which still stands but is very run-down. The King lived in one of two enormous palaces by the sea or on one of several yachts, entertaining rich foreigners and being entertained by them. He often said that after him the only kings left would be the king of England and the kings in a deck of cards. His jewelry collection included more than twenty thousand pieces. The revolution of 1952 put an end to all that and hastened the departure—or expulsion—of practically the entire foreign community. English and French residents were expelled in 1957, following the Suez war, and their property was confiscated. A few years later, most Greeks and Italians

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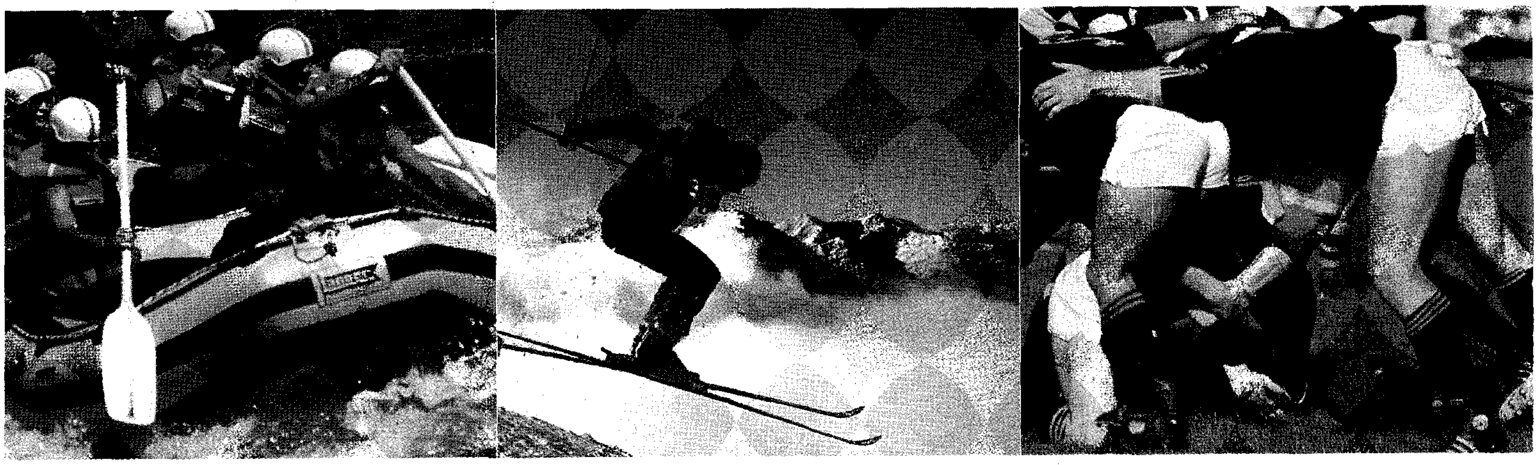

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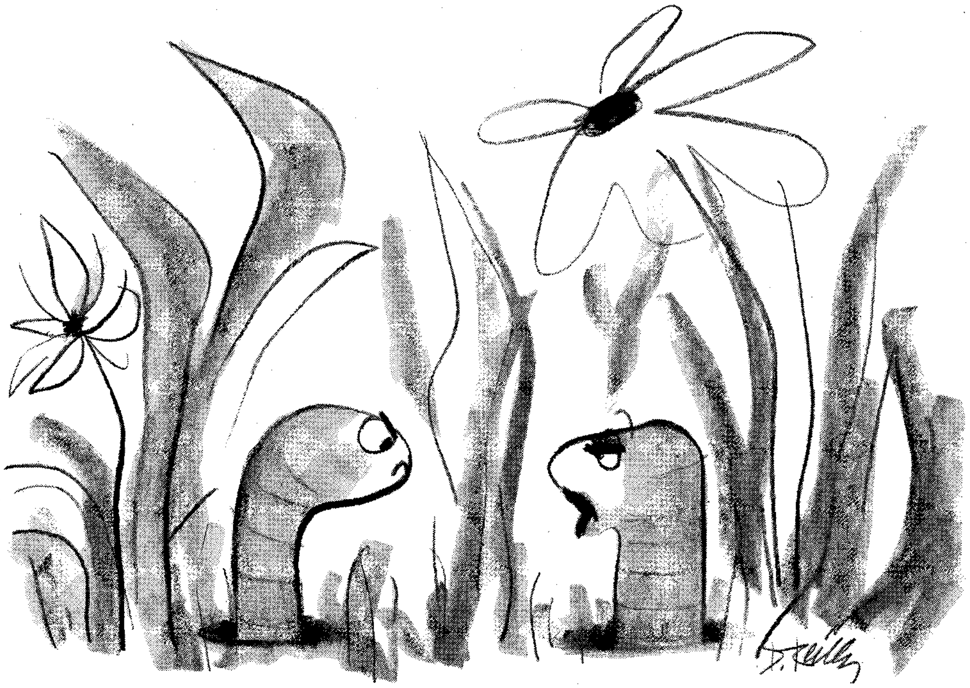
were forced out, too. Today, there are fewer than ten thousand Europeans left in the city. According to a spokesman for the local Greek Consulate, several former owners of nationalized property have in recent years received some compensation under the terms of an Egyptian-Greek treaty. Much bitterness remains, he said.

The Nasser revolution is today widely regarded in Egypt as an almost total failure. Nasser and his men ranted and raved about socialism and nationalism, but ultimately they lacked the discipline and the skills to sustain their vision. The disenchantment with the Nasser era comes through strongly in contemporary Egyptian literature. In "The Man Who Lost His Shadow," and in several other books, Naguib Mahfouz, Egypt's most distinguished living novelist, attacks Nasser's military adventurism and the brutality of his secret police. The expulsion of the foreigners is still seen as just—or, at least, as inevitable. In "Miramar," a novel by Mahfouz that was first published in 1967, there is this dialogue between Amer, an Egyptian of the ancien régime, and the Greek woman Mariana, who has remained behind after the exodus and runs a small pension by the sea:

> "Monsieur Amer, I don't know how you can say there's no place like Alexandria. It's all changed. The streets nowadays are infested with *canaille*."
>
> "My dear, it had to be claimed by its people." I try to comfort her and she retorts sharply.
>
> "But *we* created it."

ONE morning in Alexandria, I visited Isaac de Picciotto, the seventy-five-year-old president of the Jewish community. He showed me around the great synagogue, a stately Italianate building restored in 1872. It is practically abandoned now. There are no services except on days when a bus brings Israeli tourists on a visit. A sixth-generation Alexandrian, de Picciotto is an Italian citizen of North African origin, fluent in French, Italian, Hebrew, and Arabic. He owns a small shop that sells electrical appliances. He told me that of the ancient Jewish community of Alexandria only fifty old men and twelve old women are left. No one younger than sixty-five remains. "In 1948, we were more than twenty thousand," he said solemnly, as though reciting a well-known text. "Within a few years, we'll all be gone."



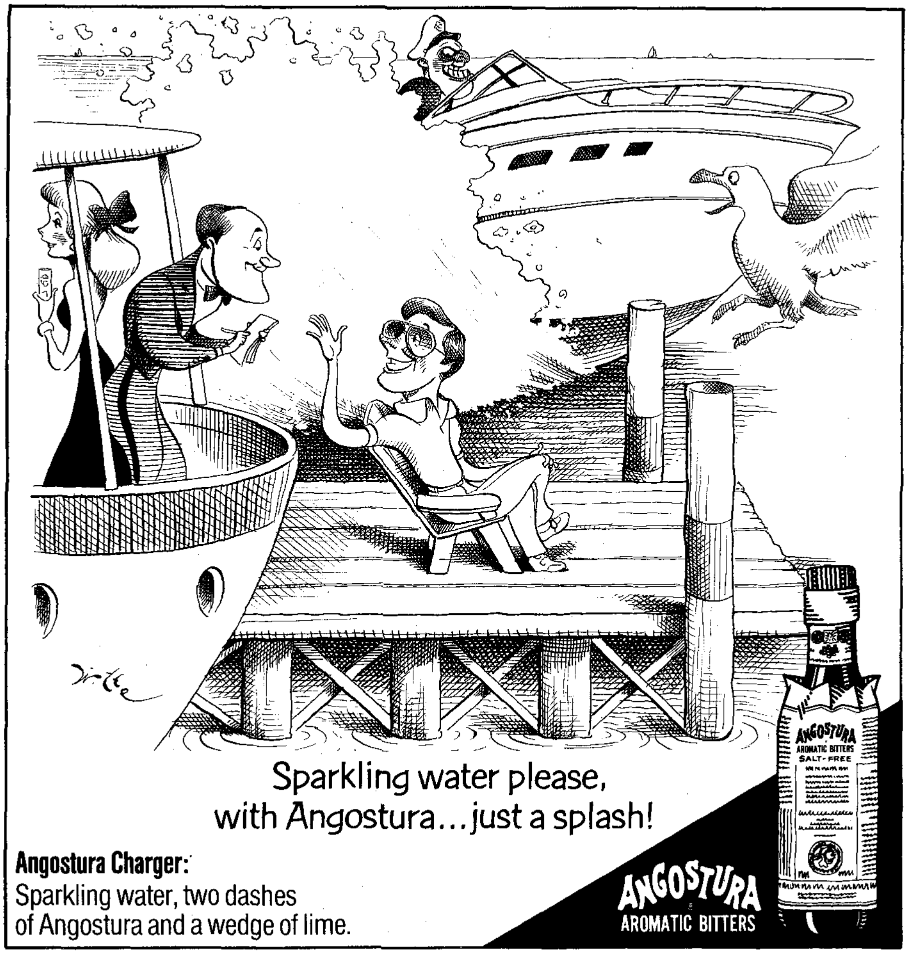
"Of course he's a worm, but don't you see—calling him a worm doesn't help matters a bit."

After a moment's silence, he said quietly that the so-called pluralist societies of the eastern Mediterranean have collapsed everywhere, and not only in Alexandria. Cyprus has fallen apart into two states, one Muslim-Turkish and the other Christian-Greek. Lebanon has completely disintegrated in the continuing war among its several ethnic, religious, and political groups. The recent Palestinian uprising raises serious doubts that Jews and Muslims could have successfully coexisted even in a pre-1967 Israel.

THE population of Alexandria is about five times as large today as it was in 1948. It was estimated at four and a half million earlier this year, almost entirely indigenous. "European" Alexandria has gone to seed, as it were, reflowering as an almost purely Egyptian, or African, city. In the downtown area, an old English hotel is still named Cecil, but it belongs to a nationalized holding company. The signs over formerly Greek cafés still say "Pastroudis," "Baudrot," "Delice," but the owners and the clientele are Egyptians. At the Atheneion, old-fashioned fans turn slowly under a magnificent Art Nouveau ceiling. An elderly waiter pointed to a marble-topped table in the far corner and said that Cavafy used to sit there with his friends in the twenties. He remembered the poet distinctly, he said, and he went on to tell me that he had started work at this café as an eight-year-old boy, refilling glasses with ice water from a pitcher. He assured me that even though he was a Muslim, a native of Tanta, in the Nile Delta, "in my heart I became a Greek," and he said, "I can recite their poetry. I have worked with them most of my life."

Place Mohammed Ali, the great square, was renamed Midan el Tahrir (Liberation Square) under Nasser, who held big rallies there. At Midan el Tahrir, he lashed out at "Egypt's enemies" and once narrowly escaped being assassinated by an Islamic fanatic. There he informed the West that it could go drown itself in the sea. There he proclaimed the nationalization of the Suez Canal, telling a delirious crowd, "The Canal will be run by Egyptians, Egyptians, Egyptians! Do you hear me? By Egyptians!"

An equestrian statue of Mohammed Ali stands in the center of the square. It is an impressive piece of French heroic sculpture, but its transfer to this spot, in 1880, aroused hostility among Muslims, and to this day it bears no inscription. It is disfigured from time to time



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There are new, high-rise office buildings nearby, and traffic policemen in smart white uniforms, but the United States consul-general in Alexandria drives through the city in a bulletproof limousine when he is on official business. In the harbor, which was once one of the busiest ports in the Mediterranean, there is relatively little life—only four or five boats daily, according to the lists published in the local papers. The city is teeming with recent arrivals from poor rural areas in the south who are in search of work. A third of Egypt's industry is said to be situated in and around Alexandria. Much of it is very recent. The sky above the city is darkened and the air is fouled by the chimneys of the foundries, asphalt works, paper and cotton mills, refineries, and food-processing plants in the vicinity. In just the past three years, over two and a half billion dollars have been invested here in new chemical works, a new textile plant, and a huge new iron-and-steel complex on a new, four-lane road to Alamein.

THE strains of excessive population growth are showing everywhere. The built-up area runs along the seashore for many miles. It begins at the Bay of Abukir (where the French fleet was defeated by Nelson in the so-called Battle of the Nile) and ends thirty miles west, in the tourist resort of Agami. Slums have sprung up in and between the old garden suburbs. The homes of the rich and super-rich are often closely ringed by unspeakable poverty. This proximity of wealth and wretchedness is a main feature of life in Alexandria today. In the twenties, the rich lived more sheltered lives along the sea, in great villas surrounded by parks, in an imaginary Europe. Of some two thousand grand villas that existed here thirty or forty years ago, fewer than two hundred still stand, according to a recent report in the Cairo daily *El Goumhouryia*. A number of them, in a state of almost complete dilapidation, can be seen along the Corniche. The sight of these ruins, and of the disintegrating stucco on the walls everywhere in the city, adds to a general air of exhaustion. The city is served (if that is the right word) by a municipal infrastructure built years ago for a fraction of its present population. Telephones, water pipes, electric-power lines often break down under the pressure. Recently, a main sewer burst in Ibrahimiya, a middle-class quarter formerly occupied by Greeks. The sewer stood open for days, threatening the water supply, while municipal workers searched in vain for the exact points of leakage. After two weeks, they had not yet found them. The charts of the original construction could not be located in the cobwebbed chaos of the city archives.

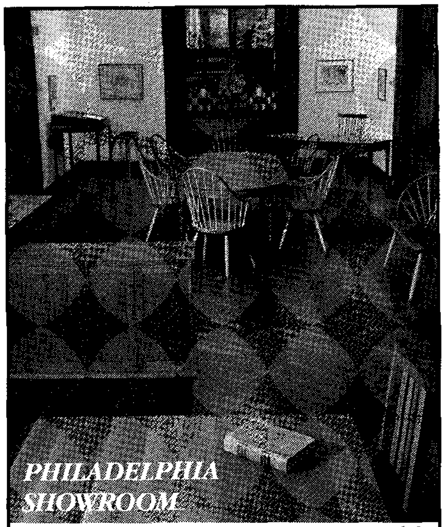
The Army is the mainstay of the present Egyptian regime. "Abolish the emergency laws and all hell will break loose," a United States diplomat said to me. (The emergency laws allow the President and his Interior Ministry to make administrative arrests and to control political activity.) President Hosni Mubarak's regime takes good care of the Army. On the Corniche, a neat little city of high-rise apartments, rented exclusively to Army officers, at liberally subsidized rates, has sprung up during the last two years. A friend drove me west past them one day to the former royal palace of Ras el Tin, from which the late King Farouk, with two hundred and four trunks and a plentiful supply of champagne, embarked on his yacht after his abdication, in 1952. His last words to the rebellious officers were "Your task will be difficult. It is not easy to govern Egypt." Those words were prophetic. General Mohammed Naguib, the first President of the new republic, failed to keep his job under pressure from Nasser, and was placed under house arrest, from which he was supposedly freed in 1960. Anwar Sadat was assassinated.

The palace, now a museum, is sometimes used to receive foreign dignitaries. It is known for its miles of gilded corridors, for its unsurpassed collection of high-kitsch furniture, paintings, and chandeliers, for its kitsch gothic and marble, for its ebony cigar holders studded with rubies, and for a secret room without windows, where the royal jewels were kept. Some of those jewels are now on public display, including a rattle studded with heavy diamonds which Farouk's father played with as a baby.

We drove past Ras el Tin and past the dock area and the busy new industrial zones along the road to the Western Desert and Alamein. It was at Alamein—then only a lonely railroad post in the narrow space between the sea and the Qattara Depression—that, as Churchill wrote, "the Hinge of Fate" turned in 1942, and the German advance on Egypt was finally repelled. Many people think of Alamein as being far out in the Western Desert, and are amazed to see that it is less than fifty miles from the suburbs of Alexandria. The new road to Alamein is now lined with summer resorts. A strategic highway, it runs two hundred and fifty miles farther, to the Libyan border, which has been closed for years, as a result of the near state of war between the two countries. At Alamein, the desert is still littered with blown-out tanks and armored troop carriers. The dunes are criss-crossed by miles of barbed wire. Little red signs warn you against unexploded mines.

There are also three large memorials at Alamein: a British and Commonwealth war cemetery, a German monument, and an Italian monument. Each fascinates as political architecture often does—as an index, not necessarily conscious, of national temperament. Great flower beds—a magnificent, if slightly incongruous, sight in this harsh desert landscape—cover the British memorial, where eight thousand one hundred and eighty-two casualties (eight hundred and fifteen unidentified) are buried under simple tombstones of uniform size but with individual inscriptions ("David McGuney—he was a great lover to his wife Tony").

The German memorial is a huge stone structure several miles down the road. From a distance, it looks like a bunker; close up, it feels like a medieval castle. It terrorizes through sheer size. Narrow shooting slots are cut in massive walls for invisible warriors. The British monument is, essentially, a cemetery; it commemorates the individual human. The German monument, by contrast, celebrates the collective. It is known in German as a *Totenburg* (a castle of the dead). "Hier Ruhen Deutsche Soldaten" ("Here lie German soldiers"). There are many coats of arms. An octagonal central hall is open to the sky. In the stagnant air, the desert sun reflects blindingly off a bright stone floor. Under the floor are buried the ashes of over forty-two hundred Germans, in one common grave. The monument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was designed in the late fifties by Robert Tischler, a German architect who pioneered this style in the thirties, even before the Third Reich. He built the first of the Nazis' *Totenburgen* during the Second World War. (Tischler's career as chief designer of *Totenburgen* for German soldiers continued uninterrupted after 1945.) A plaque says, "LET THEIR DEATH BE A HERITAGE AND A WARNING." The visitors' book is filled with didacticisms: "*Nie wieder Krieg, Frieden Über Alles*" ("Never again war, peace above all"); "Pray for peace." Also this: "*S'il y avait un Suisse comme Dieu tout cela n'aurait pas passé—g.h. Genève*" ("If God were Swiss, all this would not have happened"). There was no one about but the Egyptian guard, who closed the heavy gates behind us. He said that thousands of Germans come here every summer on their way to the bathing resorts of Sidi Abd el Rahman and Mersa Matrūh. Only the day before, there had been two busloads. They left behind little flags and a few dried flowers in the visitors' book.

Beyond the German memorial, the shoreline runs farther west, and the flat, pale-blue sea merges with a pale-blue sky at an almost imperceptible horizon. The Italian memorial stands nearby on a low hill. It rises, cathedral-like, in pure-white stone and Carrara marble. Inside, on both sides of an altar, the walls commemorate thirteen hundred missing Italian soldiers. "IGNOTI A NOI—NOTI A DIO" ("Unknown to us—known to God"), says the inscription. Then comes an almost Dantesque line: "GIACCIONO IN LUOGO SCONOSCIUTO NEL DESERTO" ("They lie in an unknown place in the desert"). An arrow points east: "Alessandria 111 km." Underneath, this reminder: "MANCARONO LA FORTUNA NON IL VALORE" ("They lacked good fortune, not valor").

Egyptians are well known for irony and self-deprecating humor. My friend ridiculed the pompous ceremoniousness of the nearby Egyptian military museum, built under Nasser, in 1965, as a monument to "the art of war." He mocked its careful "neutrality" between the Nazis and the British in the Battle of Alamein, and the indiscriminate respect shown Hitler and Churchill, Rommel and Montgomery—a heroic portrait of one matched by an equally heroic portrait of the other. Military museums are often tedious affairs—uniforms upon uniforms—as though what is important about so many dead were the uniform in which they died. Such museums usually emphasize not the horror but the chivalry of armies and wars, and this one is no exception. Many tourists come here, according to a young corporal who took us around. Many Germans come, he said, but Egyptian Army cadets come also. "They come to learn." Learn what? "To fight," said the guide. "Rommel was a perfect gentleman. Montgomery and he had the greatest respect for each other."

WHEN we returned to Alexandria, in the late afternoon, the streets were deserted. It was the holy month of Ramadan. Most people had rushed home for the *iftar*, the breaking of the fast that lasts from sunrise to sunset. An eerie silence hung over streets that are usually congested with cars and swarming with people. Foreigners who have lived here for years say that the fast of Ramadan was never so stringently and visibly observed, or so publicly honored, as in recent years. Television and radio broadcasts are interrupted five times a day for prayers. Alcohol is banned everywhere except in the big international hotels. Most restaurants are closed.

In most Muslim countries, Ramadan is traditionally an austere month. But in Egypt—and this is the other side of the coin of Muslim revival—every evening, the moment the fast ends, there is an explosion of gluttony and conspicuous consumption. During the *iftar* proper, the streets are empty. A short time afterward, the dense human mass flows back out, many people still eating sweets and nuts, and the stores reopen. They stay open, brightly lit, long past midnight, and are crowded with shoppers, as they never are during the day. Sales of food, clothing, and children's toys are higher during Ramadan than in any other month of the year. In the Cairo papers this year, columnists complained that Ramadan's lofty principles and sublime goals of austerity and introspection were being undermined.

In the little squares surrounding the main mosques of Cairo and Alexandria, the atmosphere this year was that of a carnival—something rarely encountered in other Sunni Muslim countries of the Middle East, and unthinkable among the ascetic Shiites of

Iraq and Iran, who tend to self-flagellation during the holy month. Soon after *iftar* one evening in Alexandria, I encountered a dancing bear outside Abū'l Abbās, the main mosque. There were amateur theatricals, and spun-sugar stands for children. A well-known singer was giving a free, open-air concert. There was a carrousel. A Sufi danced and danced. Men swallowed fire or swords, and young marksmen lined up to shoot moving ducks and win puppets and honeyed cakes. The carnival was still going strong at 2 A.M., an hour before the *sohour*—the predawn meal before the beginning of the fast—when drumbeaters started to circulate among the celebrators, chanting "*Isha Ya Naym. Wahhid el Dayim. Ramadan Gana*" ("Awake from sleep. Praise God. Ramadan is here").

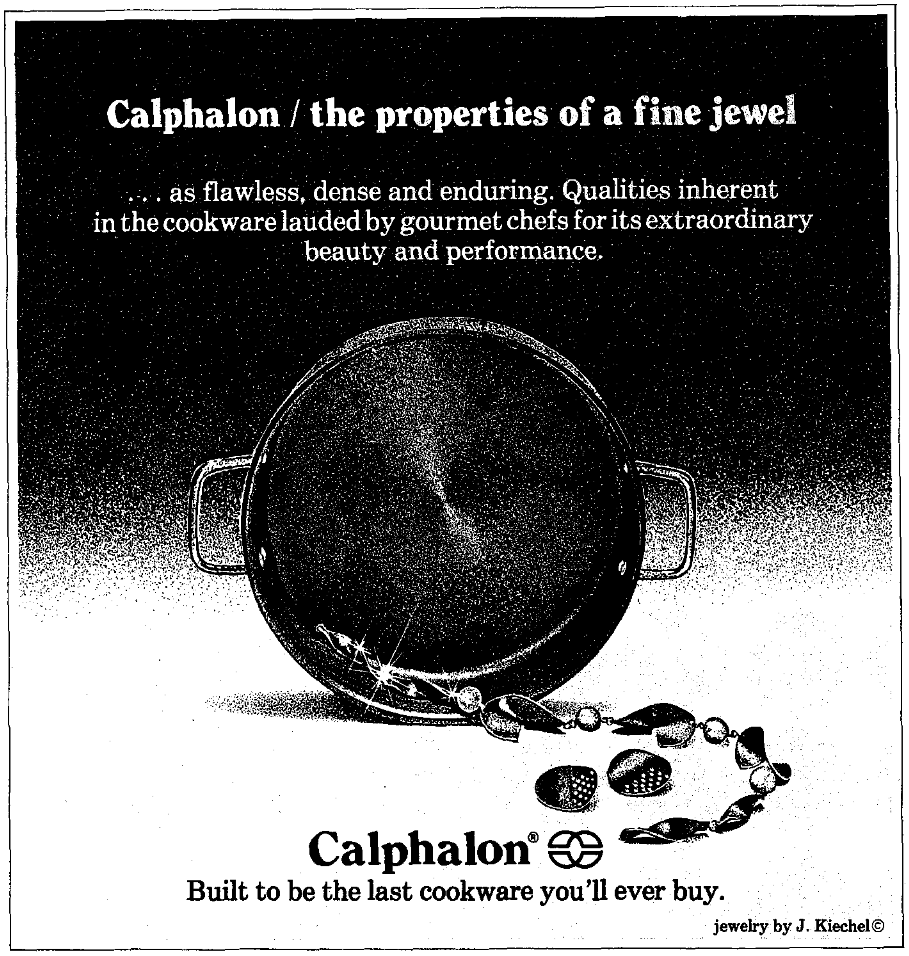
IN the hall of the old Cecil Hotel, where I stayed, and where the walls are still hung with autographs of long-forgotten European opera singers, English lords, and Austro-Hungarian grand dukes, the myths spun by foreigners were stripped away at this early hour. The elevator man had left his ornate cage and was partaking of *sohour* with the night porter, the cook, and the cashier. Their small round table, among dusty potted palms and great mirrors framed in faded gold, was loaded with loaves of brown peasant pita, little glasses of black tea, and a large common plate of *ful* (fava beans) in oil and onions. Outside, across the wide Corniche, the sea roared. The stars hung in the sky, large and luminous, as when Berenice, the Ptolemaic queen, lost a lock of her hair, and Conon, the court astronomer, was constrained to name a constellation after it. The stars' chill, ghostly light was clearly visible in the dark.

—AMOS ELON

●

The NBC series "Facts of Life" is the longest-running series now on TV, but after nine years has finally run out of gas. In two one-hour episodes, April 30 and May 7, producers will introduce the plot of a spinoff on "Facts." The original cast of four girls have all gone their own ways after attending the Eastland School. In the spinoff, rich girl Blair Warner, played by Lisa Whelchel, will buy Eastland, install herself as headmistress and turn it into a co-ed school for Columbia Pictures Television.—*Boston Globe.*

Who says there are no new plots?



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JAZZ

Jimmy Knepper, the M.J.Q., and the Duke

FOR the past couple of years, Bradley Cunningham, of Bradley's, on University Place, has been adding a horn player to his customary Sunday-night piano-and-bass duo. One Sunday not long ago, Bradley—at the behest of Sue Mingus, the widow of Charles Mingus and the manager of the Mingus ghost band, Mingus Dynasty—hired the master trombonist Jimmy Knepper, a former Mingus sideman and the leader of the Dynasty. He was accompanied by the pianist Kenny Barron and the bassist Buster Williams, both Bradley's regulars. Barron, a heavy, percussive player, pushed Knepper, a lyricist and thinker, in most of the right places. And Williams, one of the fashionably florid, bamboo-toned bassists, kept his accompanying more or less in the background and the length of his solos within sight.

Knepper is tall and thin and laconic. (He said at Bradley's that he's been losing a pound a year and if he lives long enough—he is sixty—he will disappear.) He has a small face, Einstein hair, and long, trombone arms. He wears glasses and looks like the class brain. Knepper came up at the end of the big-band era and during the early years of bebop, and one can hear in his work gracious considerations of J. C. Higginbotham and Dicky Wells and Lawrence Brown, and also the long melodic lines and expanded harmonies of Charlie Parker. He is one of the few musicians of his generation who successfully combine the orderly rhythmic tensions of swing and the rococo melodies of bebop. He is utterly original. He has a casual trombone tone, neither voluptuous nor nasal, and he avoids the bag of tricks that the instrument sometimes induces—growls, smears, shrieks, roars. He is a limitless improviser. Many improvisers rely on patterns they hit upon early in their careers: they play variations on their own frozen variations. They make it easy for the listener, who comes to count on these set phrases. But Knepper, in his oblique way, constantly needles us. Each solo is full of fresh phrases, fresh rhythmic turns, and fresh melodic insights. He makes the listener work.

For all that—or perhaps because of it—Knepper has never got his due. He is one of those superior jazz musicians who, for whatever reason, rarely win polls, don't grow rich, never rock the boat. He isn't even easy to find. He doesn't make many records, and all his regular jobs—with the Mingus Dynasty, with Buck Clayton's new big band, with Loren Schoenberg's big band, with the American Jazz Orchestra—are part time. Hearing him at length at Bradley's was a choice event. He opened his first set with three easy choruses of "Stompin' at the Savoy" and then went into a fast "What Is This Thing Called Love?" He began his solo in the second number with a sixteen-bar phrase of such subtlety and dexterity that notes seemed to be hidden behind notes, and he ended the number with a beautiful, eerie, rolling-back-the-beat legato passage. In a slow "Out of Nowhere" he was as invincibly smooth as Tommy Dorsey, and he used a lot of triplets and the sort of odd, outside-the-chord notes that Duke Ellington loved and that give improvised melody nubble and texture. Knepper closed his first set with a medium-tempo "Autumn in New York," in which he demonstrat-

"Is it my imagination, or do things seem to be slowing down?"

ed his great agility and his unceasing melodic invention (though Knepper doesn't really *demonstrate* anything; he simply does difficult things with consummate ease).

THE Modern Jazz Quartet had been together for twenty-two years when it disbanded in 1974. It re-formed on a part-time basis in 1981, and it still works several months of each year. It has just celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary, by making an Ellington album. It ran through some of the numbers during a recent stand at the Blue Note. It was strange to hear this subtle, pastel chamber group trying to distill the wild timbres and tonal genius of the Ellington band. When the M.J.Q. played "Ko-Ko," "Jack the Bear," and "Rockin' in Rhythm," the resplendent sound of the Ellington band filled one's head, reducing the quartet's efforts to decorative tinkling. It has become increasingly clear since Ellington's death, in 1974, that his compositions and the manner in which the band handled them were indivisible. In some mysterious way, the band and Ellington's music became an organic entity; the sound of the band was as important as what it played. When other groups do Ellington material, they are, no matter how inspired, once removed. In the set I heard, the group also did a medley of its earliest pieces and did a couple of new originals—John Lewis's "For Ellington" and Milt Jackson's "Minor Love." These two exhibited the wonders the M.J.Q. has long been famous for: Lewis's exquisite, pushing minimalist piano, Jackson's rolling-prairie vibraphone, and the elegant resonances of Percy Heath and Connie Kay. The repertory of the Modern Jazz Quartet consists largely of pieces written by Lewis and Jackson. Some of these rival Ellington's work, but all belong as much to the quartet as Ellington's compositions did to his band.

PEGGY LEE came back to the Ballroom this winter. Her voice and phrasing were as crafty as ever—lithe, laid-back, spacious, dark, rhythmically flawless. She likes to wear costumes when she sings, and this time she was a polar bear. She wore a white silk gown, a patterned white silk jacket trimmed with marabou feathers, a platinum fall, and large, round, tinted rhinestone glasses. She did her anthems—"Fever," "Is That All There Is?," "Johnny Guitar," and "Them There Eyes"—but she also did Ellington's buoyant "Jump for Joy" and three blues. She sings the blues in the same sad, easy curves as Billie Holiday. Peggy Lee is a matchless performer. All her moves are miniature—a lopsided smile, a low laugh, a floating hand—but all have purpose and weight. She makes her listeners feel cherished. Her singing lulls you, and it is easy to forget how daring it still is.

THE American Jazz Orchestra, completing its third season in the Great Hall at Cooper Union, gave an Ellington evening in March. The centerpiece of the concert was "Black, Brown and Beige," Ellington's first voyage into extended composition. The piece, which runs about fifty minutes, was written in late 1942 and early 1943. It had been played before in its entirety only three times: at a warmup session at the Rye (New York) High School on January 22nd, 1943; at Carnegie Hall the following night; and at Symphony Hall in Boston a week later. The New York newspaper reviewers gave it poor marks, and Ellington, dismayed, never played the piece again. But he recorded parts of it a year later, and dipped into it from time to time ("Come Sunday," "The Blues") for special recordings and for his sacred concerts. The newspaper boys were right, but for the wrong reasons. Ellington was not working within the symphonic form, or within any kind of European form. He had written a piece for his unique jazz-dance band which consisted of half a dozen or so episodic, semi-programmatic sketches mourning the travails and celebrating the triumphs of the American Negro. Considered in such terms, "Black, Brown and Beige" was a startling musical act. No other bandleaders until Woody Herman and Stan Kenton, several years later, pressed a dance band into such high-flown duty. (Kenton, who employed greatly expanded ensembles, eventually drowned in his own grandiosity.) The notion of a "Black, Brown and Beige" had been in Ellington's mind for at least ten years, and its completion was, among other things, a sociopolitical act: he was issuing a kind of musical Emancipation Proclamation—the title, indeed, of a section of the "Brown" movement.

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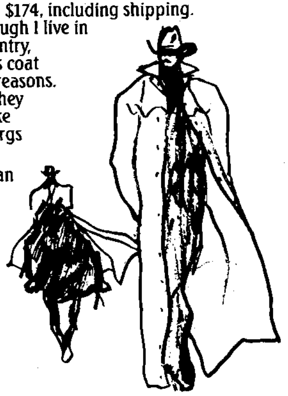

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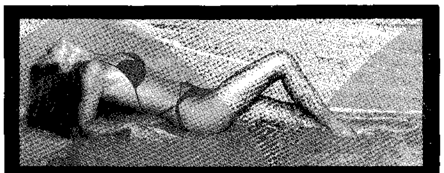

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tos Ellington set down between 1939 and 1942, "Black, Brown and Beige" seems pompous and overblown. The *sound* of the music, like some of Berlioz, is more persuasive than the music itself. But the piece has beauties. One is the spiritual "Come Sunday," played at Carnegie Hall by Johnny Hodges as an ethereal alto-saxophone solo, full of godlike glissandi and sighing, almost lachrymose whole notes. If it is possible to make religious music cool and sweet, Hodges did it that night. (Fortunately, the concerts at Carnegie Hall and Symphony Hall were recorded, and the patched-together result can be heard on the Prestige label as "The Duke Ellington Carnegie Hall Concerts: January 1943.") Other, lesser beauties include a ringing ad-lib a-cappella trumpet-section passage in "Black;" Harold Baker's lilting, bell-like solo just after "Come Sunday;" and an odd, dissonant reed-and-trombone passage just after Rex Stewart's solo in the same section. Also to be noted throughout the piece is Ellington's revolutionary use of tempo. He shifts speeds constantly, sometimes even using accelerando and decelerando. He lapses into ad-lib again and again. He uses waltz time and jumpy six-eight. This is where Charles Mingus came from.

Maurice Peress conducted "Black, Brown and Beige" at Cooper Union, and although the orchestra was ragged here and there, it was a spirited and idiomatic performance. Mel Lewis captured many of Sonny Greer's effects, especially Greer's slogging afterbeat rim shots, and Loren Schoenberg moved handsomely between Ben Webster's style and his own. Norris Turney, who was with Ellington in the band's later years, approximated Hodges' solo, and Jimmy Knepper was admirable, even doing a little plunger-mute work. The first part of the evening was given over to interpretations of half a dozen or so of Ellington's short masterpieces, among them "Main Stem," "All Too Soon," "Bojangles," and an eighteen-minute version of "Mood Indigo" put together by Ellington in 1950. (There was also one number by Billy Strayhorn, whose best work equals and sometimes surpasses Ellington's.) John Lewis, who is music director of the American Jazz Orchestra, conducted this part of the concert and, as is his wont when he conducts, set some disastrously slow tempos. The "Mood Indigo," which had lovely things in it, went by like a swaybacked horse.

THE eightieth-birthday celebration held in Carnegie Hall in April for the great French violinist Stéphane Grappelli involved the cellist Yo-Yo Ma, the singer Maureen McGovern, the Juilliard String Quartet, the harmonica player Toots Thielemans, the dancer and singer Harold Nicholas, the New York rhythm team of Mike Renzi, Jay Leonhart, and Grady Tate, and the pianists and composers Michel Legrand and Roger Kellaway, the last of whom doubled as musical director for the evening. Aside from an occasional Gallic touch (a couple of Legrand songs, the first movement of Debussy's String Quartet in G Minor), the concert had nothing to do with Grappelli until it was well into its second half. Then three things happened: Grappelli, appearing for the first time, did an easy "Sweet Lorraine" with Yo-Yo Ma, Kellaway, and the rhythm section; swam through a P. T. Barnum "Pennies from Heaven," in which he was teamed with Legrand and Kellaway, the string quartet, Yo-Yo Ma, Thielemans, Nicholas, and the rhythm section—all of them, at one point, sawing, blowing, tinkling, thumping, and plucking; and played several liquid, jumping numbers with his trio (Marc Fosset on guitar and John Burr on bass). He has lost nothing: his melodic lines arch and float and skim without the slightest hesitation or tremor. Grappelli believes that performers should dress dramatically onstage, and he was in one of his famous warring outfits—a light-colored, open-neck flowered shirt and Black Watch pants. You could hear him before he made a sound.

THE tenor saxophonist Warne Marsh died late last year, at the age of sixty. He died in California, where he was born and raised. He had distinguished Hollywood antecedents. His father, Oliver H. T. Marsh, was a well-known cinematographer ("David Copperfield," "A Tale of Two Cities"), and his aunt Mae Warne Marsh, after whom he was named, was a silent-film star. Marsh came up under the tutelage of the brilliant, relentless pianist and teacher Lennie Tristano, whom he considered nonpareil. His friend the alto saxophonist Gary Foster once said of him, "His sound on the tenor is completely untenorlike, just as Jimmy Knepper's sound on the trombone is completely untrombonelike. Both men seem to use their instruments simply as vessels to contain their notes. They could be playing any instrument." His tone was brown and thick, and he used almost no vibrato. His melodic lines were Proustian. He was an intellectual improviser, who played long, intensely complex melodic lines, which demanded complete concentration and offered no over-the-counter emotions. He was never a popular player: he never courted his audience when he performed. He disappeared inside his music. He was a shy, hidden, restless man who waited for the world to come to him and, when it did, returned the compliment in full. Marsh might have been a cult figure but wasn't. Cult figures often leak; Marsh was watertight.

And Woody Herman, an indefatigable bandleader and teacher for over fifty years, died last fall, in his early seventies. Between 1944 and 1946, Herman, after almost ten mediocre years in the big-band business, put together a band that came to be known as the First Herd. Though it consisted largely of young players, Herman had the wisdom and courage to hire the veteran (and alcoholic) drummer Davy Tough over the objections of his young Turks. Tough, a tiny, ingenious drummer, who was the greatest cymbal player of all time, picked that band up and made it fly. Herman spent the rest of his life searching for another First Herd, but he never found one.

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

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The Society will have a guided tour of the museum from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. The time between the tour and 4:45 p.m. can be used to the desecration of the individual, whether it be in the University Mall or whatever.—*Goreville (Ill.) Gazette.*

In the Mall, most likely.

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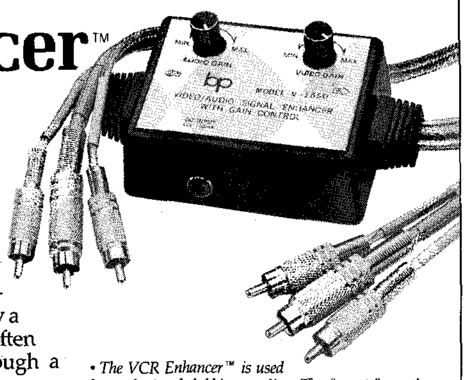

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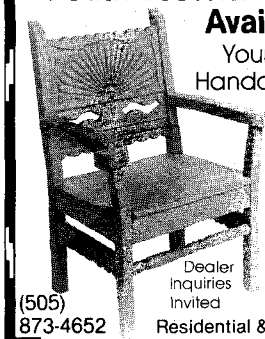

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AROUND CITY HALL

STARS AND BARS

NEWS of what governments are up to, like so many aspects of contemporary life, is generally dispersed in accordance with the star system—in this case, by way of speeches, pronouncements, or prop-heavy ceremonies, featuring, front and center, Presidents, governors, mayors, or prominent members of Congress, or even, on occasion, state legislators or City Council leaders. Perhaps because there are not nearly so many stars or, for that matter, featured players among judges, news of the third branch of government, the judiciary, gets only spotty attention, except during some particularly sensational trial. This state of affairs tends to prevail, even though the sworn revelations in trial courts of ugly, sometimes bloody events in given jurisdictions often turn out to be painfully at odds with the word about the same areas just handed out in upbeat photo-opportunity sessions at City Hall and other seats of government. Recently, in this city there has been a new preoccupation with the third branch. Not that New Yorkers are entirely comfortable in their minds about either the executive or the legislative sector of their local government. According to a *Times*–WCBS-TV poll published on July 1st, only twenty-seven per cent of them think that Edward Koch should be reëlected mayor. And there was no public outcry when, a week earlier, the *News* columnist Gail Collins wrote that the Majority Leader of the City Council would have trouble realizing his goal of having the Council's role in government taken seriously since "half his membership has the I.Q. of a cucumber." Lately, however, questions about what has been going on in the courts—such questions as what the law is, whether one can get away with thumbing one's nose at it, and whether there is, in fact, equal justice under law—have caused deep uneasiness on the local scene.

One reason for the especially unsettled feeling about such matters here is, of course, the Tawana Brawley case. When the trial of Bernhard Goetz began, late in 1986, it was a common observation that a person would have to have been living in a cave not to know the details of Goetz's bloody subway encounter with four young blacks, and surely only a cave dweller needs to be reminded now that Tawana Brawley is the black teen-ager from Wappingers Falls, New York, near Poughkeepsie, who said that over a period of four days she had been brutally attacked and raped by six white men, one of them a policeman. Since then, three Brawley-family advisers from this city—Alton Maddox and C. Vernon Mason, both lawyers, and the Reverend Al Sharpton—have refused to allow her or her mother to give any further testimony about the attack or to coöperate in any way with the authorities, including the state attorney general, on the ground that justice is not possible for blacks in a white-dominated criminal-justice system. While those keeping track have been trying to decide how much truth there was to this charge and at the same time to figure out if the whole thing was a hoax ("A PACK OF LIES" was the headline on the cover of the July 4th issue of *People*), developments in the story have dominated the front pages here. By coincidence, the last few weeks have brought a steady series of other events involving courts and the law—sometimes four or five of them in a single day—which have often caused the doings of local legislators, and even the latest picturesque antics of the city's mayor, to receive greatly reduced attention.

"Lauren—stop trying!"

THE local papers for the first day of this month were especially full of headlined reports of legal developments. United States District Court Judge John F. Keenan, for example, had ordered Koch's Department of Investigation to send over to the court at 1 P.M. each day twenty-five thousand dollars as a penalty for being in contempt of court. This is believed to be the first time the D.O.I. has ever been held in contempt. The fine was levied in the case of Bess Myerson, the Mayor's longtime friend, who was his Commissioner of Cultural Affairs until April, 1987, when it became clear that her legal problems might lead to an indictment. Miss Myerson, who the Mayor has said is no longer a friend of his, is scheduled to go on trial—together with her lover, Carl Capasso, and former State Supreme Court Justice Hortense Gabel—on September

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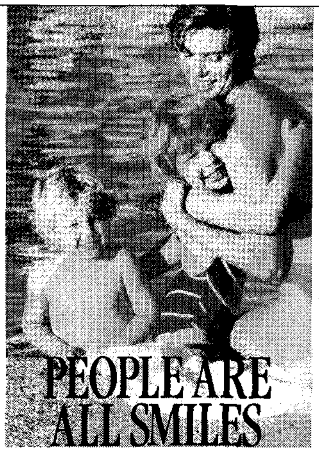
14th on charges that include the accusation that Miss Myerson's provision of a city job for Justice Gabel's daughter was followed shortly by the Justice's sharp reduction of Capasso's alimony payments to his former wife. Judge Keenan had declared the D.O.I. in contempt because it had defied his order to deliver to Justice Gabel's lawyer documents that the lawyer believed would be helpful in preparing her defense. The fine was stayed by an appeals court while it considered the city's position that handing over the papers would prevent their use in connection with further federal investigations of corruption here. This argument was thought to be of interest because for many months the Mayor has taken the position that the long-running municipal-corruption story should be treated as a relic of the distant past, not worth even a mention anymore.

The same day that the D.O.I.'s contempt citation was reported, there was a headlined reminder that the corruption story was far from over for the best known of the City Hall regulars convicted to date: former Bronx Democratic boss Stanley Friedman, who, along with two erstwhile city employees, was convicted in federal court in November, 1986, of turning the city's Parking Violations Bureau into a racketeering enterprise for their financial benefit. Friedman had been not only a highly reliable political ally of the Mayor but his close friend. Long before the scandal broke, Koch, on being questioned at a public meeting about the deal that eventually led to the 1986 conviction, demanded of the questioner, "How dare you say those terrible things about Stanley Friedman?" After the verdict, however, Koch wrote to the judge in the case, Whitman Knapp, urging him to impose the harshest possible sentence. Knapp gave Friedman twelve years. When the conviction was upheld by a federal appeals court on June 14th, a *News* editorial described his trial as having "shone a spotlight into the murky depths of the cesspool of corruption" at City Hall. "Ring the bells! Wave the flags! Strew roses at the feet of the judges!" said the editorial writer, quite carried away.

Friedman's last hope to avoid jail was a June 30th appearance before Judge Knapp at the federal courthouse, three blocks north of the Bronx boss's old stamping ground, City Hall. He asked for a new trial, claiming a conflict of interest on the part of his former counsel, Thomas Puccio. A witness against Friedman had since admitted having lied about a figure in the case who was also a Puccio client. Puccio, who as a federal prosecutor presided over the Abscam cases and as a defense lawyer helped win an acquittal for Claus von Bülow on a charge of attempted murder, would not have been pleased to face a rerun of the Friedman case, because in still another legal development of that week he was now busy with the case of Bill Cayton. Until June 24th Cayton had been Mike Tyson's manager, but the heavyweight champion decided to cut him off from any share of the profits from the big June 27th Atlantic City fight. Twenty-two-year-old heavyweight champions are not generally reflective sorts, but as Tyson deals with high-powered lawyers it may occur to him that he could have used one of them nine years ago, when, as a young hood roaming the streets of the Brownsville area of Brooklyn, he was arrested as a mugger and sent to reform school. He has already made it clear that he feels some kinship with at least one young black who many believe has been badly treated by the criminal-justice system. Last winter, he accompanied the promoter Don King on a visit to Tawana Brawley in Wappingers Falls, promised to pay for her college education, and gave her a thirty-thousand-dollar Rolex watch he was wearing.

JUDGE KNAPP was not persuaded by Friedman's conflict-of-interest argument. He ordered Friedman, who once had a sign on his office wall that said "Crime Doesn't Pay—As Well as Politics," to appear five days later at the federal prison in Springfield, Missouri, to start serving his twelve-year sentence. Nor was Friedman the only Bronx politician to make legal headlines on the first of July. Other news stories that day reported the latest developments in the Wedtech trial, in which Bronx Representative Mario Biaggi and former Bronx Borough President Stanley Simon, who was Friedman's protégé, are charged with taking large payoffs in return for helping arrange military contracts for the Wedtech Corporation and, in Simon's case, helping arrange a city lease for it—a project in which a letter from the Mayor proved to be, perhaps inadver-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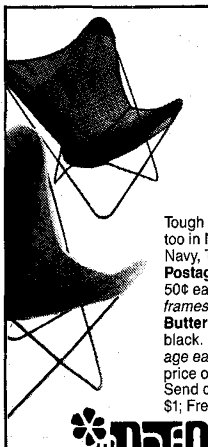
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tently, of use, according to the trial testimony.

The crimes charged against Friedman, Biaggi, Simon, and Myerson in the proceedings that made headlines on July 1st were the familiar ones associated with municipal graft from time immemorial: naked greed and corruption of office, with, for the former Miss America, the added element of passion. The moral and legal lessons of two other trials that made headlines here on that same day were of a different sort: No setting fire to a house because you have a low opinion of the people who might move in there. And no arranging to have a woman's head blown off because she testified before a grand jury.

In the first of these cases, Phillip Amato, a carpenter, his wife, Rita, and their neighbor, James Raffa, who is the service manager for an automobile dealership, were convicted of torching a two-story frame house that resembled many others on the Gladwin Avenue block in the Flushing area of Queens, where the defendants lived. When the verdict, for which the sentence could be as much as fifteen years, was announced, the court reporter broke into tears. "These are middle-class, ordinary people," she told members of the press. Two years ago, news stories had reported that several hundred babies—most of whom had been abandoned at birth by their mothers—were living in city-hospital wards and that some of them would have to remain there for years, because there were no foster parents to care for them. Trying to resolve the problem as best it could, the city's Human Resources Administration had begun a program of leasing houses with small yards in residential neighborhoods, where such babies—known as "boarder babies"—could be looked after, six to a house, by H.R.A. workers.

Although the neighbors of many of the houses leased for this purpose were not keen on the project, the Gladwin Avenue house got off to an especially perilous start. In December of 1986, Mrs. Amato reportedly shouted, "Burn the house down." Soon afterward, she led a community group that brought a civil suit to prevent the city from installing the babies in the house. The group argued that the plan would downgrade property values and the quality of life in the neighborhood, because the babies' mothers—and the mothers' friends—would visit. The city gave assurances that there would be no adult visitors. The Gladwin Avenue area is virtually all white, and most of these babies are black or Hispanic. The Gladwin Avenue neighbors insisted, however, that their objections had nothing to do with race. Nevertheless, on the night of April 20, 1987, the house was set afire.

During the arson trial that ensued, which lasted five weeks, a neighbor of the defendants testified that, as the house burned, Raffa had said "It's a beautiful sight, isn't it?" and Mrs. Amato had lifted a glass in a toast to the spectacle. On the morning after the fire, Mayor Koch visited the scene and called the torching "a terrorist act." Mrs. Amato told him that he should have "put the house in Bess Myerson's back yard." After the verdict against the Amatos and Raffa, Phillip Amato declared that the case would never have been pursued against them if his wife hadn't infuriated the Mayor with that remark. At City Hall, Koch said that the convicted defendants had committed a "depraved" act and that he hoped the judge would "throw the book at them." Phillip Amato's lawyer, in his summing-up, had described the indictment as a "political" prosecution, undertaken because Koch, who plans to run for reëlection next year, had "sought to ingratiate himself with certain groups"—by which, the lawyer later explained, he meant "minority groups."

After the verdict, Mrs. Amato said she had done nothing wrong, and blamed the "moron" Mayor for interfering. "It's none of his business," she said. "He put himself into it, as he did in Howard Beach." In the matter of that other Queens community, whose name has become a universally recognized metaphor for white violence against blacks, the Mayor had also urged the judge to "throw the book at them." Three members of a gang of white youths who had attacked three black men, leading to the death of one of them, got sentences ranging from five to thirty years.

IN the second of the trials in which verdicts were handed down in a Queens courthouse on July 1st, no comfort could be found. Still, there would have been an additional grim element if the case had been one more example of interracial violence in this

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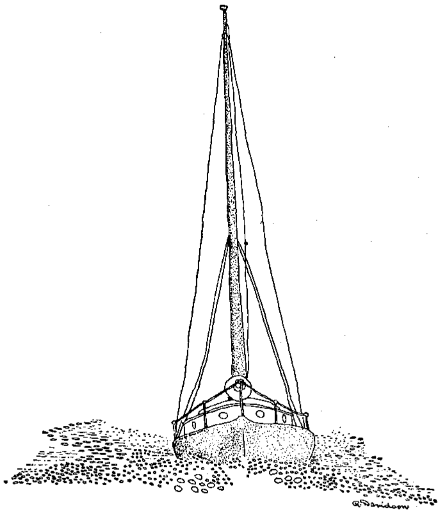
city. But the murdered woman, Mildred Greene, and all the defendants in the case, who ranged in age from eighteen to twenty-two, were black. Mrs. Greene, a sixty-one-year-old grandmother who was fond of playing bingo, had been a witness last September to a shootout on Linden Boulevard in South Jamaica, Queens—a heavily crack-infested area, where she had been employed for fifteen years as a dispatcher for the Big D. Royal Car Service. Testifying before a grand jury, she had said she was unable to identify any of the participants. One of those charged in the shooting was a twenty-two-year-old crack dealer named Derrick Kornegay, who had embarked on a turf war with a higher-level dealer named Lorenzo (Fat Cat) Nichols. When Kornegay learned that Mrs. Greene had testified, he called a meeting of members of the gang who worked with him and ordered that she be killed. On the night of October 4th, one of his cohorts blew off her head with a sawed-off shotgun. According to a videotape made by the police, another of the dealers, nineteen-year-old Tracy Middleton, found her with her head blown off as she lay on the floor, and shot her again with a pistol, although, as he explained on the tape, he had known her and "she was a nice lady." The prosecutor, James Quinn, told the jury in his summing-up that what the defendants had done "strikes at the very heart of the criminal-justice system and the heart of civilization." Mrs. Greene, he said, "worked for a living and lived in a rented room, and she responded to a grand-jury subpoena, and because she did she was murdered."

After the killing of Mrs. Greene, the police and the district attorneys' offices strengthened their witness-protection programs, especially those involving testimony in drug cases. A witness on Inwood Street in Queens who was willing to testify against drug dealers on his block was given round-the-clock protection. In front of his house at about three-thirty in the morning of February 26th of this year, a twenty-two-year-old white rookie cop, Edward Byrne, keeping guard in his police car, was shot through the head at close range, allegedly by a band of young blacks at the direction of high-level drug dealers, who wanted to "send a message" to the police. One of the more bizarre aspects of the Tawana Brawley case is that two of the drug dealers whom the Queens District Attorney's office has linked to the Byrne shooting are clients of the Brawley-family adviser C. Vernon Mason, who has frequently denounced drugs as a plague in the black community. In a chilling demonstration of the current fierceness of racial hostilities in some quarters—certainly in southeastern Queens—a detective working on the Byrne case reported that the young killers had passed by the house on each of the two preceding nights and had moved on when they saw that the cop on duty was black. After they shot Byrne, one of the gunmen, according to the police, was heard saying to another, "Did you see his blue eyes?"

After the murder verdict in the Mildred Greene case, Quinn, the prosecutor, assured the court, "It will be a message to those who would intimidate witnesses." Some potential witnesses, however, may have seen the lesson not in the verdict but in the murder. In the first Howard Beach case, which was concluded in December of last year, George and Maria Toscano had helped convict three of the four white defendants by describing their beating of the black men after the blacks, whose car had broken down, strayed into a pizzeria in the nearly all-white Howard Beach community. Five more of the alleged Howard Beach attackers are now on trial on charges of first-degree riot and, in one case, attempted murder. This time, the Toscanos, to whom subpoenas were sent out, could not be found. Their lawyer explained that they had received threats, apparently from their Howard Beach neighbors, and that they were now afraid to testify. Eventually, they were tracked down in neighboring Nassau County and brought into the Queens court under arrest, and only then did they agree to testify again that they had seen a group of young white men hit one of the blacks with a bat and a big tree limb, and that Mrs. Toscano had cried out to her husband, "Oh, my God, they're killing him!"



THE message of the verdict in the Gladwin Avenue house-burning case was that citizens, no matter how threatened they feel, must not take the law into their own hands. Two days before that verdict was reached, however, New Yorkers had a reminder that another local jury had reached a different conclusion. On June 28th, a state appellate court ordered a revision of the sentence originally given to Bernhard Goetz: six months in jail and five years' probation. The court said that the judge, Stephen Crane, should have either imposed the mandatory one-year term provided by state law for illegal gun possession or explained why he thought such a sentence would have been "unduly harsh." The mandatory one-year law was the statute whose passage caused Mayor Koch to star in an often repeated television commercial in which he opened a cell door and then dramatically clanged it shut, saying, "You've got the gun—we've got the room." At the time Goetz was sentenced, however, Koch did not call on the judge to throw the book at him. The June 28th appellate-court decision was a reminder that the trial jury, although it convicted him on a gun-possession charge, had acquitted the folk hero on all other counts—including attempted murder, assault, and reckless endangerment.

Barry Slotnick, long a successful local defense attorney, became a celebrity-about-town as a result of his handling of the Goetz case. On June 27th, Slotnick got news of a client who had had the criminal charges against him dismissed entirely. Last March, as a young mother was paying for a birthday cake for her baby in a bakery in East Harlem—also known as Spanish Harlem—with a twenty-dollar bill, a man snatched the money from her and ran outside. People in the store and on the street caught up with the man—Raymondo Caraballo, a neighborhood drifter and drug user—and beat and stomped him so brutally that he died in the hospital four hours later of what the autopsy report called "blunt force

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trauma." At City Hall, the Mayor, hearing of the event, denounced the crowd's action as "vigilante justice." Of eight members of the crowd who were arrested, several obliged the police with videotaped statements in which they said that they had punched and kicked the victim although he begged for his life and that they felt no remorse and would do it again. Eventually, Slotnick took the case of one of them, Charles Mimms, as a favor to a friend. Last month, the office of Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau announced that he was dismissing all the criminal charges against Mimms and most of the others. Mimms said happily, "They dismissed my case because I didn't do nothing wrong." Slotnick said, "Justice has been done. . . . It signifies the fact that sometimes citizens have to lift up their own hands in self-help and to help others."

Though this result was impressive, it hardly compared with Slotnick's victory last year. He and members of his law firm represented John Gotti, the head of the Gambino organized-crime family, Gotti's brother Gene, and colleagues of theirs in a trial in federal court on an array of charges, including loan-sharking, racketeering, and murder. The trial lasted seven months, and the defendants were acquitted on all counts. John Gotti is the most famous resident of Howard Beach; other residents there sometimes credit his celebrated presence with helping to keep the community relatively crime-free—except, of course, for problems that arise with uninvited visitors. Gotti's annual Fourth of July party was a smash this year, as usual. Gotti had considerable reason to celebrate. On June 28th, in still another legal development in this area, New Jersey's United States Attorney announced the foiling of a murder scheme: twenty-two members of the Genovese family had been indicted on charges that they had plotted to rub out John and Gene Gotti, whom the Genoveses suspected of muscling in on their territory. The head of the Genovese family is Vincent (Chin) Gigante, who spends much of his time on Sullivan Street in Greenwich Village. In what would appear to be a risky conflict of interest, Slotnick is now Gigante's lawyer. A giant fireworks display was planned for Gotti's party. A dozen cops stopped by early in the evening to say that it could not take place, because Gotti had no permit. The fireworks were carried out into the street and set off anyway. Fire trucks and delegations of police came by several times and then quietly withdrew. "All they did was make themselves look foolish," said Peter Gotti, another brother of the Gambino-family boss.

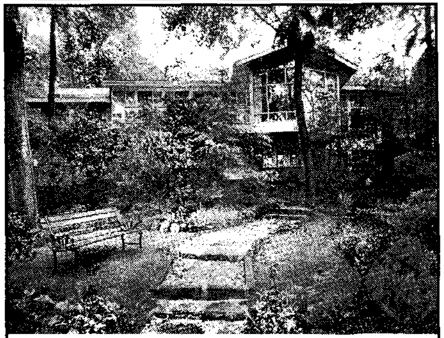
ON the old-time Main Street, now familiar to most Americans only from good-old-days movies, the mayor's office, the police station, the courthouse, and the town jail were all a short walk from each other. Institutionally, the area of the East Side of Manhattan which lies just south of Chinatown bears some resemblance to that now quaint setting, if one doesn't dwell on such immense differences as height and number of buildings and on the throngs of people—thousands of politicians, cops, judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers, bail bondsmen, and the like, not to mention defendants—who move in and out of the neighborhood daily during civil-service hours. Within a few blocks of each other are City Hall, Police Headquarters, half a dozen courthouses representing various levels of government and varieties of jurisdiction, and two jails. The inscription on the Tombs, where city prisoners are kept for short periods, reads "Where Law Ends There Tyranny Begins." The only inscription on the federal prison, four blocks south, is a sign identifying it as the Metropolitan Correctional Center. The inmates there include witnesses needed in federal cases and detainees awaiting trial or sentencing.

In the last week of June, the Center's population was an unusually motley company. Ivan Boesky, the noted swindler, who made eighty million dollars on insider-trading tips and is now serving a three-year sentence in a California federal prison, was in residence, having been brought here to testify in another insider-trading investigation. There were also two inmates whose cases have a significance far beyond national borders. One of them, Mahmoud Abed Atta, who is a naturalized American citizen and a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization, has been held there since May, 1987. In April, 1986, according to Israeli authorities, he took part in an attack on an Israeli tourist bus travelling through the West Bank in which one person was killed and three were injured. When he fled to Venezuela, he was turned over to American authorities under an Israeli extradition warrant. So far, however, he has avoided extradition, and has remained at the Center. On June 17th, a federal magistrate in Brooklyn ruled that Atta could not be extradited, because what he had committed was a "political offense," and extradition is forbidden in the case of "those who have sought to promote political change" in the country where they are wanted.

A fellow-inmate, Joseph Doherty, has been at the Center longer than any other prisoner in its history: five years as of June 18th. In 1980, Doherty helped set up an ambush in Belfast in which a British Army captain was killed. While he was being tried, he escaped to the United States. In 1983, he was picked up by the F.B.I. in a Third Avenue bar. A federal judge ruled that he could not be extradited, citing the political-offense provision. On June 14th, however, Attorney General Edwin Meese ordered Doherty deported to Great Britain. Four days later, some three thousand people marched around the prison in protest, to the accompaniment of Irish Nationalist songs. In a jail interview, Doherty said he would "do it all over again."

OCCUPYING another cell at the federal prison on the day of the demonstration was Larry Davis, a twenty-two-year-old black man, who also considers himself a political prisoner, or, at any rate, a victim of the city's racist criminal-justice system—a point that his lawyers make almost daily in court. The trial in which he is currently a defendant—he is charged with having engaged in a November, 1986, shootout with members of the city's Police Department—is a state-court proceeding, being conducted in the Bronx Supreme Court. Until last December Davis was held at the Bronx House of Detention. While there, he was involved in a number of violent events, in some of which he was the apparent victim. He insisted that guards had assaulted him and encouraged another prisoner to try to kill him with a razor. Davis's lawyers portrayed the guards' alleged actions as an extension of a vendetta between Davis and members of the police force, with whom the guards work closely on a daily basis. Davis claims that the reason for the vendetta is that he was for some time involved with a drug-dealing operation run by some members of the force, and that when he tried to shake loose from it they planned to shut him up permanently so he couldn't inform on them. Not all New Yorkers consider this an implausible scenario: last March, a jury acquitted Davis on murder charges that the defense had insisted were a police frameup. His trial on the shootout charges began last April. Early in May, the Bronx District Attorney's office pointed out that, by the use of challenges, his lawyers had successfully limited the jury thus far to minorities—five blacks and one Hispanic. In the past, efforts in the South to keep blacks off juries were a familiar tactic; here was the Bronx variation. The judge dismissed all six jurors, and ordered the defense and prosecution to start over again. By late June, a full jury had been chosen: eleven blacks and one white. However, the white juror then approached the bench and told the judge that his wife was fearful of his serving as a juror in the trial because of the danger of reprisals. In this case, the fear was not of drug dealers. She was afraid that if her husband voted to acquit Davis there would be reprisals from members of the New York City Police Department. On June 28th, the judge declared a mistrial, and a third effort to impanel a jury got under way. On July 5th, Davis put in a collect call to *Newsday* from the prison. "When I beat this rap," he told the paper, "I'm either running for the United States Senate or moving to Sweden, where the cops can't get me." —ANDY LOGAN

HOMES & ESTATES



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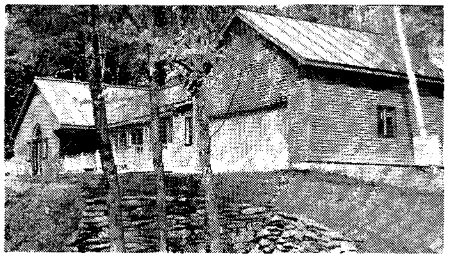

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THE THEATRE

The Cutting Edge

An actress got up like the Statue of Liberty, draped in an American flag, and lying derelict-fashion in front of an empty chair; a photomontage of immigrant faces; a tinny recording of Sinatra singing "That's America to me" . . . If one of New York's more progressive private schools were to sponsor a seventh-grade pageant on the theme, "The American Dream As Seen Through the Eyes of the Nation's Immigrants," that's pretty much how I would expect it to begin—Lady Liberty as bag lady, Old Glory spread out on the dirty stage floor.

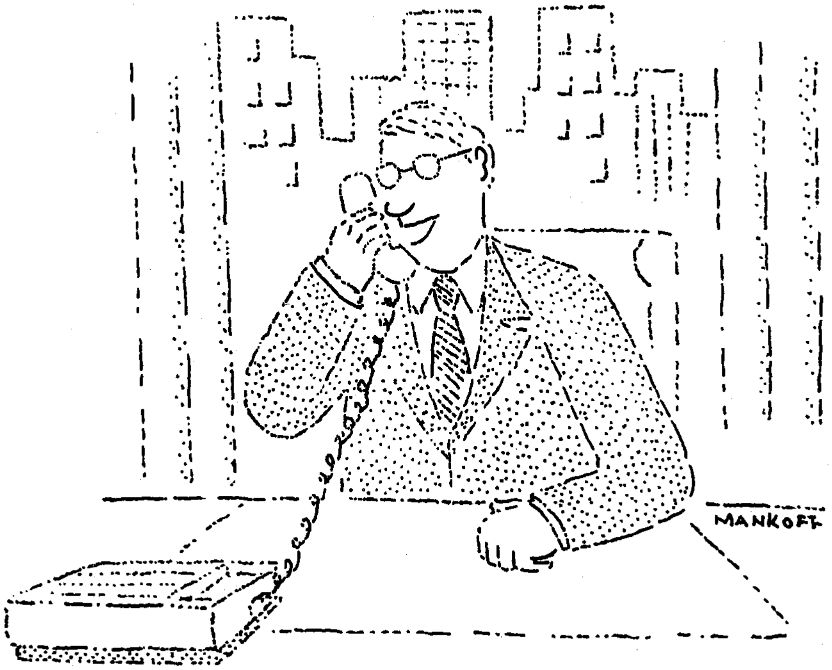
At the beginning of "Green Card," a multimedia theatre piece that ran from June 13th to June 25th at the Joyce Theatre, the actress playing the Statue of Liberty picked herself off the floor, hitched up her flag, and climbed onto the chair. From there she made a speech. It was heavily ironic, a comment on the land of opportunity, and ended with Emma Lazarus' famous verse. Before the words of the inscription had died on the Statue's lips—before she had even finished uttering them—an actor with slicked-back hair appeared, bearing a wireless microphone. "Are there any niggers here tonight?" he inquired. For the next few minutes, the actor paced the stage pointing to members of the audience and calling them names: "There's two niggers. And between those two niggers sits a kike. And there's another kike. (That's two kikes and three niggers.)" It's a famous Lenny Bruce routine, the explicit point being that it is the *suppression* of racial epithets that gives them their power to harm. "Green Card" suppressed Bruce's explanatory punchline, so the sequence established little more than that the experience of having racial slurs hurled at one is unpleasant and that standup comedians are a crass, vulgar lot.

"Green Card," which originated at the Mark Taper Forum, in Los Angeles, was the first of three productions being brought to New York this summer by the American Theatre Exchange. Written and directed by JoAnne Akalaitis, "Green Card" used the devices of the nineteen-sixties' confrontational theatre to make the point that because immigrants have no rights in this country the American dream is a lie. Early in the first half (which is the only half I saw), an actor told a formulaic Jewish immigrant's story of hope and hard work rewarded, while members of the company struck histrionic poses to underscore the hackneyed quality of the tale. Later, to introduce a segment intended to poke fun at the values of people who live in Los Angeles, "Green Card" had members of the company dance to a few bars of the Mamas and the Papas singing "California Dreamin'."

All this is a particularly resourceless form of irony. Cowardly, too—like the wit of the pupil who makes a rude noise behind the teacher's back. But the kid who makes fun of the teacher, after all, is taking a risk. (Teacher may turn round.) JoAnne Akalaitis takes no risks. The objects of her satire are Geraldo Rivera, television commercials, Bianca Jagger, fast food, and L. Ron Hubbard. She uses irony only to state the obvious—that game shows exist; that illegal aliens have a tough time of it; that ethnic jokes are racist; that immigration involves a certain amount of red tape—or to reinforce views that she can be pretty sure most of the audience already holds. Thus, a sequence in which actors make haranguing speeches about the necessity of adapting and learning English is meant to confirm us in our notions about the virtues of bilingual education. Miss Akalaitis does not actually address the subject of bilingual education—a complicated issue, some would argue. She does not go into any detail about the laws and bureaucratic processes that surround immigration. She simply shows us an immigration official forcing an applicant to read aloud from the Bible, an image that's meant to symbolize American cultural imperialism.

Agitprop theatre of the sort that "Green Card" purports to be is supposed to dislodge the preconceptions of its intended audience. But the audience at the Joyce Theatre didn't seem especially disoriented on the night I attended "Green Card." People smiled and laughed and nudged each other as an actress came down the aisle impersonating a loudmouthed Jewish woman, and happily helped themselves to rugelach from the plate she offered. They hooted during the game-show sequence, when members of the company—a Hispanic actress, an Oriental actor—offered broad portrayals of Puerto Rican and Chinese stereotypes, never once noticing that what they were laughing at amounted to a series of racist jokes. If *épater le bourgeois* is in any sense Miss Akalaitis' purpose, she must be doing something wrong.

—Mimi Kramer



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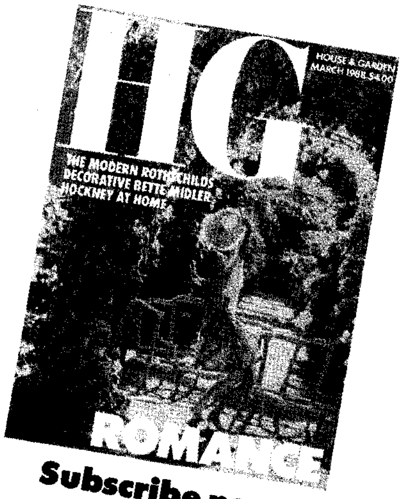

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HOUSE & GARDEN

MUSICAL EVENTS

Fairest Isle

OJAI is a small town in a beautiful valley about seventy-five miles northwest of Los Angeles. The Shangri-La scenes of "Lost Horizon" were filmed there. Since 1947, it has been the home of the famous Ojai Music Festival, associated with Lawrence Morton, Stravinsky, Robert Craft, Pierre Boulez, Messiaen, György Kurtág, and many other luminaries of contemporary music. This year, the composer-in-residence was Peter Maxwell Davies, and the music director was Nicholas McGegan. (Boulez returns next year.) There were five concerts in three busy, halcyon days, during which, also, a production of Davies's children's opera "Cinderella" was played thrice.

Mr. McGegan, with the Philharmonia Baroque (California's established early-music orchestra) and members of the Santa Barbara Choral Society, conducted a concert version of the Dryden-Purcell opera "King Arthur." New York has not seen the piece since 1800, it seems, and could hardly have seen or heard much of it then, for it was the second item on a Park Theatre triple bill. Purcell's big dramatic works (as I wrote after the recent "Fairy-Queen" in Philadelphia) call for the combined prowess of singers, actors, dancers, instrumentalists, and scenic machinists. Mr. McGegan's buoyant concert performance, reminding listeners that the music is fresh, beautiful, and excellently dramatic, made them eager for a full stage presentation. At least two productions are planned for next year: in St. Louis; and at the College of William and Mary, in Williamsburg, to mark the tercentenary of the monarchs' accession. Although Dryden drafted "King Arthur" for Charles II, in 1684, it reached the stage only seven years later; and "not to offend the present Times," the poet wrote in his Epistle Dedicatory, "I have been oblig'd . . . to alter the first Design." Queen Mary and her Maids of Honour attended a performance early in 1692. Possible allegorical content in Purcell's dramas is considered in recent studies by Curtis Price and Ellen Harris. Speculation on how—if at all—such allegory should affect modern productions, and modern audiences' perceptions, can be left until after a "King Arthur" that preserves something of the original creators' design. The matter does not arise in a concert performance. In Ojai, the scenes were set by a dramatic narrative, drastically condensed from Dryden, which was spoken by Malcolm McDowell in a variety of accents: silly-ass posh for the British king, stage pleb for his Saxon antagonists. We heard a lively sequence of numbers mystical, martial, magical, loving, lewd, pastoral, patriotic. Nancy Armstrong—the Purcell Prima Donna of our day—took the soprano roles with brio and accuracy. Paul Elliott, who has twice recorded the tenor music, turned in a proficient performance that warmed at last into enthusiasm. James Busterud, a baritone in the bass roles, seemed outclassed—stylistically and registrally out of his depth. The two choristers, Jo Anne Ando and Judith Boyd, who played topless sirens in a temptation scene that prefigures "Parsifal" did so alluringly. Whatever the technical deficiencies of a McGegan performance may be—those of "King Arthur" included some wheezy string sound and some errant intonation from trumpets and oboes—it takes fire from the conductor's keen, delighted responses to the music, and so moves listeners to delight. Two days later, Mr. McGegan, with the Ojai Festival Chamber Orchestra (players from the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Ventura Symphony, and elsewhere), conducted "Petrushka." I have heard more accurate accounts but few in recent years that so decisively invited attention to the music itself, not to the way it was being played. Mr. McGegan's other assignments were Bach's Fourth Suite, a Rameau "Pygmalion" suite, and the "Water Music," all with the Philharmonia Baroque; and Davies's "Ave Maris Stella" and Stravinsky's "Soldier's Tale" Suite with the ensemble California E.A.R. Unit "and friends."

Davies's Oboe Concerto had its American première. This is the first of a set of ten concertos—the "Strathclyde Concertos"—that the Strathclyde Regional Council and the Scottish Arts Council have commissioned from Davies for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, with its principals as soloists. (Strathclyde is a region of Scotland that includes Glasgow; Davies is the orchestra's "Associate Composer/Conductor.") The concerto had its first performance in Glasgow, in April; Davies and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, with its first oboe, Robin Miller, will be playing it on their fall tour of America. The Ojai soloist was Stephen Colburn, first oboe of the Milwaukee Symphony; the composer con-

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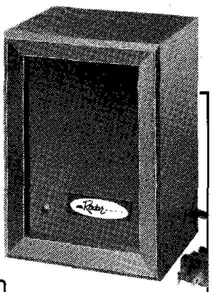

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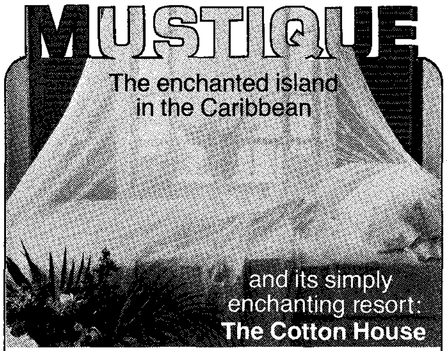
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ducted the festival orchestra. Mr. Colburn was poetic in the work's long, high flights, which in the cadenza rise twice to a sustained A in alt. (Elliott Carter's new Oboe Concerto, which was played in Zurich last month, and is due in New York in December, begins on that difficult note.) Sources of the work lie in Davies's new interest in providing modern repertory for a classical orchestra (he began with the Sinfonia Concertante, the Sinfonietta Accademica, and "Into the Labyrinth," all of 1983); in his conducting of Mozart's Oboe Concerto with Mr. Miller and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra; and in the 1986 Violin Concerto he composed for Isaac Stern. In a program note he pointed to some procedural and even melodic links with the Violin Concerto—"musical problems unsolved, material still capable of extension, still worrying me from the older work." The plainchant "Dum complerentur dies pentecostes"—heard plainly at the start, then in manifold transformations—provides a starting point for the pitch material, and its Whitsun text suggested the "tongues like as of fire" that flicker around several episodes. The orchestra is pairs of flutes, clarinets, and horns; strings; and timpani. This is one of Davies's least turbulent works. The formal adventure of the symphonies is pursued in leaner textures. The harmonies are refined. The flame of invention still burns bright, but less fiercely, with pure, steady light. The Sturm und Drang of the Expressionist years yields to a calmer mastery.

Another Ojai concert brought the American première of "Into the Labyrinth," which is at once a cantata and a concerto with a tenor as soloist. Here formal adventure mingles with Orcadian cares. The text, by George Mackay Brown, is a four-elements structure, prompting musical images of fire, of wind tossing the barley and bringing the ships to harbor, of the fruitful earth, and of water in rills and as "the palace of fish." But the pattern of long centuries is broken now by commerce; in a later movement, the elemental imagery is spoiled and broken. "There came engine and oil." (The London première of the piece was at a concert sponsored by Mobil North Sea Ltd.) The fourth movement "ends gently, with flutes suggesting distant gull or curlew calls, across the deserted islands." A fifth movement, recalling the first, suggests a possibility, at least, of future, distant healing.

In the Orkneys, there is a building, Maeshowe, that was built perhaps forty centuries ago; perhaps thirty centuries later, it was broken into by Vikings and inscribed with runic graffiti. (Davies set some of the inscriptions in his "Stone Litany.") "Into the Labyrinth" had its first performance, conducted by James Conlon, in the twelfth-century cathedral that was built to house the bones of Magnus, Earl of Orkney. (He is the protagonist of Davies's opera "The Martyrdom of St. Magnus.") In Ojai, there is less sense of human antiquity. Oak Grove Indians and their successors, the Chumash, used to live there; what few traces they left are in the Ojai Museum. In 1837, the Mexican government granted the valley to Don Fernando Tico. In 1874, the entrepreneur R. J. Surdam founded the town of Nordhoff, renamed Ojai in 1917. The railroad came, and has disappeared again. Orange groves flourish; oil and sulfur have been found in the hills. But the festival concerts are given in a park, in a pretty dell flanked by old trees. New oaks have grown up beside the concert shell (which was built in 1956), and shaped themselves to it, as if to bless it. Chirping birds by day and, one night, two shrieking owls—inhabitants of the valley before invading white men came to claim it—added their commentary to the music from Europe. And so "Into the Labyrinth" did sound in a long perspective; the vision of man and nature shaped by local circumstance acquired related associations. The composer conducted, and the tenor—as at the première, and on a Unicorn recording of the work—was Neil Mackie. He was gentle and true, but I would like to hear the piece one day with a more trenchant and colorful soloist.

Other Davies works heard during the festival were the Purcell Fantasia and Two Pavans—the fantasia transcribed in shrill, bright colors, the pavans transformed into foxtrots—and "An Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise," the piece, written for the Boston Pops, that ends with a bagpiper. The composer also conducted a gripping account of Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony. Some of what Hanslick wrote of Wagner after his "Eroica" performance can be repeated of Sir Peter:

"He has spirited intentions and . . . he knows how to realize them. His energetic, fine, and distinctively nuanced rendition of the 'Eroica' provided us, by and large, with true delectation." The rest of the famous review is inapplicable: this was not a reinterpretation flawed by what Hanslick deemed one composer's personal distortions of another. It was formally energetic, contrapuntally transparent, instrumentally vital, rhythmically urgent: a composer's true tribute to the great work.

The concert grove seats about nine hundred people, in tiered rows; a lawn behind the seats holds about three hundred more. Loudspeakers carry the sound to the lawn, and within the grove there is also some judicious amplification. Acoustic problems troubled only "Ave Maris Stella," which is not an outdoor work. All the Ojai concerts were taped, for future broadcasting, by WNYC.

I MISSED the Philharmonic's performances of Davies's Violin Concerto, in May, but have been listening to the recording of it made by Mr. Stern, the Royal Philharmonic, and André Previn (CBS). The orchestral forces are those of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto (double woodwinds, horns, and trumpets; strings; timpani), which Davies calls "perhaps my favourite of all concertos, and the one that has influenced me most." Like the Mendelssohn, the piece is in three continuous movements. Another influence on it was the "awe-inspiring" atmosphere and the resonant acoustics of St. Magnus Cathedral, where—under a blaze of television lights—it was first performed. The music, the composer says, "is pervaded by sounds of sea and sea-birds." Intervals and rhythms of Scottish music mark much of the melodic material. The first movement, longer than the two others together, alternates dark, shifting music from the wind choirs and soaring string melody. The tempo is allegro moderato, but the pace seems rather slow. There is a virtuoso cadenza. The middle movement is based on a bagpipe tune of Davies's, "conjuring up the near-silent expanses of still, lonely moorland with its characteristic sea-reflected silver northern light, where cries of moor and sea-bird, wind in heather and the distant wash and boom of the Atlantic are the only sounds." The soloist plays chanter pipe, the strings provide the drone. This is an immediately attractive movement, with a central episode in dramatic contrast. The finale includes a hint of Highland reel, with the soloist as lead fiddler.

The concerto is a largely pleasing but also a puzzling, slightly bleak, unsatisfying work. Perhaps it just needs a more cogent sort of performance. Mr. Stern brings little energy to the numerous Scotch-snap inflections. (He—and Mr. Colburn, too, for the Oboe Concerto—should listen to Adelina Patti and to Nellie Melba singing "Comin' thro' the Rye," and rendering the snap rhythm in a variety of beguiling ways.) I agree with a colleague's careful suggestion that a performance of the piece "by a violinist and orchestra more accustomed to contemporary music may alter the impression that it is restrained in character." It has been played in Holland and in Glasgow by Ernst Kovacic, and in Zurich by György Pauk, all with the composer conducting; and in Finland by Diana Cummings.

PURCELL'S "Dido and Aeneas" received two productions this spring. Neither was happy. In Symphony Space, I Cantori di New York and the New Opera Theatre of New Orleans collaborated on a version that required the singers to move jerkily, like robots, and refrain from addressing one another during dialogues. Antic action was added to the airs, but the company froze into immobility during the dances. Bart Folse conducted with a heavy hand, even beating in continuo chords during the recitatives—or "declamatory airs," as Miss Harris in her recent "Dido" monograph (Oxford) prefers to call them. The Belinda, Susanna Waters, was a charming singer. The other production was presented by the New Amsterdam Singers, in St. Peter's Church, at Citicorp. There was too large and fat-toned a chorus, too small an orchestra. (The same little band, Dongsok Shin's La Stravaganza, played for both shows; there were three more strings in St. Peter's, but the players were way off at the side.) Neither Paul Echols' staging nor Clara Longstreth's conducting flowed easily. A breakneck tempo for the "quick" of the overture was exciting by intention but untidy of execution. Again, there was a charming Belinda: Julianne Baird.

—ANDREW PORTER

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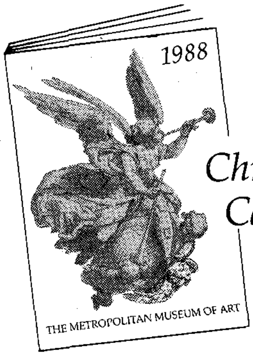

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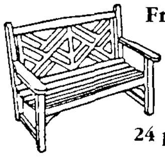

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A CRITIC AT LARGE

AGEE

IT must have been on a Tuesday evening. *Time* went to bed late on Monday nights in those years—this was in the fall of 1939—and such was the intensity of the last two or three days of our work weeks that we did all we could to set fire to our weekends, which fell on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. That night, Wilder Hobson, a madcap nephew of Thornton Wilder's who had been Dwight Macdonald's roommate at Yale, was giving a party in his apartment for some of the magazine's writers (all of whom were male then) and their wives or girls. I was recently back from a stint for *Time* in Japan and China, and I saw that there was a new guy in the crowd.

He was at the heart of a constellation on the other side of the room, and he seemed to be doing all the talking. There were rockets of laughter going up. Someone told me the man was Jim Agee. There was no particular reason to know the name then. I vaguely remembered Hobson's having told me some zany stories about Agee, with whom he had worked at *Fortune*, over in the Chrysler Building; *Time's* offices had been on a different floor, and I'd never happened to meet Agee. I think I had heard that with the support of Archibald MacLeish, who had also been writing for *Fortune* then, he had had a book of poems published in the Yale Younger Poets series, and that he had a reputation for having written, on assignment, a series of such relentlessly brilliant and quirky and subversive articles that Henry Luce and the editors of *Fortune* were obliged to scrap several of them. He was now reviewing books for *Time*.

I drifted over to his claque. I saw a tall set of muscles draped on an armature of long bones. In those days, most of us dressed in jackets and ties, even during off hours, but he seemed to be in old work clothes, open-necked and warped by long use to the shapes of his body. He ducked his head now and then, as if to dodge unthinkable thoughts, and his dark hair was wild. He had a prominent vein down the middle of his forehead; blue-gray eyes, which seemed to change color with the tones of his talk; the bulging bags of an all-night writer under them; a deep woundlike dimple in his right cheek when he laughed; a big, brave nose; and thick lips over tobacco-stained and badly snaggled teeth. The second incisor on the left was missing, leaving a gap through which tobacco smoke jetted and curled. Yet he was somehow, all in all, wonderfully, passionately handsome.

No one else got many words in. He talked with both his tongue and his hands. It seemed that for this person words had not only sound and meaning but also physical weight, volume, and shape, and to these qualities he tried, as he spoke, to give their full value with his long fingers and strong palms—molding the clay of abstractions, arranging mental flowers, tightening difficult screws, caressing lusted-after erogenous zones, touching ideal chords on a ghost piano, and even, in moments of awe or vehemence, stretching his arms and tilting the axis of the whole world. A performance.

The night wore on, bottles were emptied, tongues thickened—but not Agee's, though he drank enough to stun a rhinoceros. Hobson got out his trombone and blatted and booped along with Louis Armstrong on a record. People teased Agee to do his famous send-up of Leopold Stokowski conducting his execrable orchestral arrangement of the Bach D-Minor Toccata and Fugue. Finally, he obliged. He was very drunk, but suddenly he became, with infinite control and with a rage of critical intelligence, not only Stoki but all hundred and eight instrumentalists of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Standing his hair on end with his fingers, and ours with his hilarity, he conducted and played and made the sounds of mulberry cellos and farting tubas and twiddly fiddles—and at the same time set before our eyes the figure of Bach himself, turning in his grave at one of the many scandalous vulgarities of the twentieth century.

JAMES RUFUS AGEE was born on November 27, 1909, in Knoxville, Tennessee. His mother, Laura Whitman Tyler Agee, was Anglo-Catholic, loving but rather rigid, a scold. She came from well-educated, bookish folks who believed they were somehow descended from the bachelor Walt Whitman; her son, at any rate, would one day occasionally betray, as his friend Robert Fitzgerald pointed out, "a fondness for the barbaric yawp." James' father, Hugh James Agee, known as Jay, was warm, open, and virile, a doting parent to his son and a younger daughter, Emma. When James was six years old, Jay Agee, returning in his Ford from a visit to his sick father, drove off a road down a steep embankment and was killed. This loss cut a terrible wound in the son, the scar of which burned in his skin his whole life long.

Three years later, Agee's mother entered him in St. Andrew's, an Anglo-Catholic school mostly for poor boys, a mile from Sewanee, Tennessee. The family lived in a tiny wooden bungalow up the hill from the school. The students were roughnecks, ranging in age from six to twenty-five. Agee wanted to be called by his rustic middle name, Rufus, but the boys nicknamed him Sophocles. He was hopelessly sloppy, and he could never do anything on time, so he would be summoned before the student council and sentenced to five or ten whacks with a paddle, which were then administered by a twenty-year-old; whereupon he would run off to Momma up the hill. Rufus's miseries were eased by a person who became a lifelong confidant and consoler. ("My love to you always; my oldest and dearest friend," Agee wrote at the end of a letter many years later.) He was a teacher at the school, a kind and intelligent priest named James Harold Flye, who had been finely tuned, at Yale and the General Theological Seminary in New York, to become a worthy substitute father to this boy whom critics like Dwight Macdonald and F. W. Dupee would one day shamelessly call a genius. For his part, Father Flye found Rufus "by nature gentle, sympathetic, affectionate, outgoing, and trusting—some fine qualities." At St. Andrew's, under Father Flye's tutelage, the boy fell permanently in love, if not with pure belief, at least with the beautiful language of Christendom. He worshipped the holy words. In "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men," he wrote:

> I used as a child in the innocence of faith to bring myself out of bed through the cold lucid water of the Cumberland morning and to serve at the altar at earliest lonely Mass, whose words were thrilling brooks of music and whose motions, a grave dance: and there between spread hands the body and the blood of Christ was created among words and lifted before God in a threshing of triplicate bells.

At fifteen, he entered Phillips Exeter Academy, and there he was born again—as a writer. The school's English Department was strong, and Agee soon set his cap for the Exeter literary club, the Lantern, and its literary magazine, the *Monthly;* eventually, he became president of one and editor of the other. He scraped along with C's and D's in most subjects, but got straight A's in English. The Lantern was host to Booth Tarkington, an Exeter graduate, for a speech; and Agee befriended Freeman Lewis, nephew of Sinclair, whose work he briefly admired. He wrote for the *Monthly* a story about the death of a father, but mostly he wrote romantic poems, Whitman-flavored at first—in honor, perhaps, of the myth of his bloodline. It was at this school that movies first began to print themselves indelibly on his retinas. He avidly read Dos Passos, Dreiser, Hemingway, Jeffers, Frost. He invited the last of these to come and do a reading, and he showed the poet some of his shorter poems. Frost's response seemed, at best, charitable; Agee had not wanted to bother Frost with his best work, a long narrative poem, "Ann Garner," which would later find a respectable life in Agee's Yale Younger Poets collection, "Permit Me Voyage." At Exeter, as at St. Andrew's, he launched another lifelong friendship—this time through the mail, with an Exeter alumnus who had become a literary hot dog at Yale, Dwight Macdonald.

Uninfluenced by Macdonald, when it was time for college Agee trooped with Exeter friends to Harvard. There he stamped out the patterns of his whole life: became a nocturnal animal by choice; a maverick, rebellious against the conventions of his habitat, too fond of the release of alcohol; a non-stop talker; a bonfire of tobacco; a chaser of skirts; and a wizard with perfectly unexpected words. The summer after his freshman year, he went bumming across the land as a bindle stiff, decades before Kerouac: working hard with his body in the wheat harvest on the plains and living on pittances—empathizing with the outcasts of the world, and pretending with all his heart that he was one of them. At college, he made friends with a gentle, thoughtful fellow-poet, Robert Fitzgerald, a class behind. Agee wrote for and eventually became the president of the undergraduate literary magazine, the *Harvard Advocate.*

In the spring of 1930, a tutor took Agee to Clinton, New York, to visit the family of Dr. Arthur Percy Saunders, a professor of chemistry at Hamilton College—and a musician, a painter, a botanist. His wife, Louise, when she was an English teacher at Cornell, had demanded that even though (or, let's say, because) she was a woman she should be listed as a professor rather than a mere lecturer; she resigned when she was rebuffed by the all-male executive committee. She had later lost a son, killed in a fraternity scuffle at Hamilton. She soon virtually adopted this charming, witty Harvard boy as her surrogate son; he spent the summer in her home, and this time he harvested two decisive consequences. One was an apprenticeship in wordcraft with a frequent houseguest, the British poet and critic and gifted glassblower of language I. A. Richards, who was teaching at Harvard. The other was to fall for the Saunderses' second daughter, Olivia, called Via, who was six years older and a lot more conventional than he. She moved to Cambridge.

IN his senior year, Agee's *Advocate* issued a parody of the most successful magazine on the market, *Time.* As Agee put it in a letter to Roy Larsen, a former business manager of the *Advocate* and now the same for *Time,* he and his friends had imagined a *Time* staff "set down in Ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt, and Palestine, with an uncommonly long nose for news, several amphoras of rye, vivid but confused recollections of the 20th century, a somewhat cockeyed sense of TIME, and no sense whatever of chronology." Written, a bit creakily, in hokey, neologistic timestyle, the parody got widespread attention in the papers—and, of course, in the Chrysler Building.

Real time passed, and Agee, facing the prospect of diving into the icy-cold river of the Depression, wrote to his pen pal Dwight Macdonald, by then politically a Trotskyite and professionally a writer for the monthly manual of capitalism, Henry Luce's *Fortune*, asking for help in getting a job, perhaps at the magazine he had lampooned. Macdonald went instead to Ralph Ingersoll, the liberal editor of *Fortune* (he was later the publisher of the leftist newspaper *PM*), and spoke for the Harvard boy. Ingersoll at once said that of course the originator of the famous *Time* parody could have a job.

And so Agee went to work, in the summer of 1932, on the fifty-second floor of the Chrysler Building for the magazine that Luce had founded to celebrate wealth and power—at a time when the homeless poor were living in tin-and-cardboard shanties in Central Park, respectable people were selling apples on the street in order to survive, and long lines were forming at forlorn soup kitchens. What a strange haven for this prickly young man, in whom a vague social anger was beginning to bloom like a pale cereus unfolding in the dark. Robert Fitzgerald later commented that for *Fortune* to hire Agee was "like Germany enlisting France." Yet there was a nurturing atmosphere on the magazine, a sense of a seedbed. Besides Macdonald, vivid Wilder Hobson wrote for it, and the star of the staff was Archibald MacLeish, whose "Conquistador" had won a Pulitzer Prize. Even Hart Crane had done a short stint there.

The efficient MacLeish wrote his pieces and at five o'clock put on his hat and left. But for Agee no word in journalism had been so appropriately chosen as "deadline": it originally meant a line drawn around a prison which no inmate could cross without being shot. He stayed up nights writing miniature script in pencil with a record player at full blast. To Father Flye he wrote, "Something attracts me very much about playing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony . . . with all New York about 600 feet below you, and with that *swell* ode, taking in the whole earth, and with everyone on earth supposedly singing it." Later, in a spooky passage in "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" he instructed the reader how to *become* that music. (In spare time that fall, by the way, he wrote a now lost short story entitled "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.") In the winter, he married Via Saunders, moved with her into a tiny apartment in Greenwich Village, read writers who became his teachers—Joyce and Céline and Malraux—and went to a million movies.

After rather bumpy experiences with articles on butter, cockfights, and quinine, Agee was offered a plum: a piece on one of Franklin D. Roosevelt's more successful undertakings, the Tennessee Valley Authority. This took him to his natal ground, and he rose to the challenge with the first outcry of his mature voice. His opening lines:

> The Tennessee River system begins on the worn magnificent crests of the southern Appalachians, among the earth's older mountains, and the Tennessee River shapes its valley into the form of a boomerang, bowing to its sweep through seven states. Near Knoxville the streams still fresh from the mountains are linked and thence the master stream spreads the valley most richly southward, swims past Chattanooga and bends down into Alabama to roar like blown smoke through the flood-gates of Wilson Dam, to slide becalmed along the crop-cleansed fields of Shiloh, to march due north across the high diminished plains of Tennessee and through Kentucky spreading marshes toward the valley's end where, finally, at the toes of Paducah, in one wide glassy golden swarm the water stoops forward and continuously dies into the Ohio.

Luce called Agee in and told him that the T.V.A. story was one of the finest pieces *Fortune* had ever run, and that it was time for Agee to learn how to write about business; word went around that he had offered to send Agee to the Harvard Business School—but Agee, thank you, had had enough of Harvard. Later, Luce heard disturbing reports that Agee didn't follow very closely the generally understood Time, Inc., dress code. All too true. At a time when white-collar workers who had jobs at all prided themselves on keeping their collars white, Agee usually wore dark shirts, often plaid, so that their being soiled would not be visible; he wore each of them long enough to trail pungently after himself a very particular scent of his Ageeness. Luce apparently sent Agee a memo to "watch it." Luce then assigned Agee an article on the price of steel rails, tore his draft apart, and reassigned the piece to Macdonald. Agee began to mutter to his friends about shooting the boss. According to Fitzgerald, "Jim imagined himself laying the barrel of the pistol at chest level on the Founder's desk and making a great bang."

He became depressed, both by *Fortune* and by friction with Via. He wrote Fitzgerald about his job, "It varies with me from a sort of hard, masochistic liking . . . to direct nausea at the sight of this symbol $ and this % and this *biggest* and this some blank—billion . . . But in the long run I suspect the fault, dear *Fortune*, is in me: that I hate any job on earth, as a job and a hindrance and semi suicide." Indeed, he had earlier written Father Flye about a much more literal attraction to death, and one day Wilder Hobson dropped by his office and found his friend hanging by his hands *outside* his fifty-second-story window. Terrified that his presence might cause Jim to let go, Hobson hid, quaking, beyond the door into the hall until Jim climbed back in and sat at his desk, "strangely calm."

Agee was assigned next an article on the American roadside, and he was angered to find it illustrated with photographs by one of Luce's favorites, Margaret Bourke-White, whose pictures of the poor struck him as the height of liberal condescension. Then he was given the orchid, of all things, to write about, and his prose was distilled rage: "The orchid gets its name from the Greek *orchis*, which means testicle; and there are those who condemn that title as understating the case, since to them the flower resembles nothing printable so much as a psychopathic nightmare in technicolor." The piece was rejected. Agee put in for six months' leave, and went to Florida to struggle with Via and start drafting a "Knoxville novel"—the first tender bud of "A Death in the Family."

Then, suddenly, in June, 1936, a month after his return, all that had been dark turned light. Ingersoll assigned him to do a story on sharecroppers in the Deep South. Furthermore, Ingersoll delighted him with the news that Walker Evans, not Bourke-White, would be the photographer to work with him. He rushed to Fitzgerald to tell him of his luck. "He was stunned," Fitzgerald later wrote, "exalted, scared clean through, and felt like impregnating every woman on the fifty-second floor." That night, Agee wrote to Father Flye—and it is fascinating that in this moment of his white heat, knowing he was now obliged to drop work on his draft of a book about his lost father, he opened a letter to the priest with the words "Dear Father"—and he told of his assignment: "Best break I ever had on *Fortune*. Feel terrific personal responsibility toward story; considerable doubts of my ability to bring it off; considerable more of *Fortune's* ultimate willingness to use it as it seems (in theory) to me."

Without the faintest idea where or how to start, Agee and Evans set out for the South. Outwardly, they were opposites. Evans was a dandy who wore custom suits, shoes handmade in England, and elegant hats; took daily baths and combed his hair; was short, sly, brisk, and laconic. He had dropped out of Williams after one year and, in the mid-twenties, had gone to Paris to act out the life of an expatriate writer, piling saucers up in Left Bank bistros and staring shyly at famous big ink-guns, but he found he couldn't, for the life of him, haul words up out of the deep well of his reserve. Back in America, he had stumbled on photography and had soon perfected a vision that suited his melancholy dignity—a literal seeing with the camera eye which rebelled against the arty, doctored plates then in fashion, and derived instead from the documentary moodiness of Mathew Brady and the starkness of the world of Chaplin's tramp. Eventually, he was hired by the Farm Security Administration to record the misery that the Depression had brought to farmers; then he began getting assignments from *Fortune*.

Agee was entranced by Evans. Jim idealized honest photography and yearned to achieve its merciless exactness in his writing, and he found that Evans shared his contempt for government bureaucrats and Luce bureaucrats. Evans' vinegary temperament gave no ground to Agee's everlasting emotional storms, and Agee steadied under his influence. For the rest of Agee's life, Evans was the one person from whom he took—or, at least, listened to—stabilizing advice.

Where were sharecroppers, anyway? Agee and Evans headed into Oklahoma. None there. They drifted to Alabama and wandered around in an aimless and, for Agee, a guilt-ridden search (it seemed to him, as an operative of *Fortune* in the fields of misery, shamefully Bourke-Whiteish)—a search for perfect poverty, sacred poverty, that of the noble wretched of the earth. They met up with a band of black singers. Was this what they wanted? They listened, and then Agee, in an agony of bourgeois awkwardness, gave the leader fifty cents. They frittered away their time, taking random photographs and notes; they had to ask *Fortune* for permission to stay a second month.

Finally, Evans, seeing Agee paralyzed by his doubts, made a move. Taking pictures one afternoon by the courthouse in Sprott, Alabama, he got talking with a local tenant farmer, Frank Tingle (who turned out to be one of Agee's famous men, Fred Ricketts). Two friends of Tingle's, Bud Fields (Bud Woods of the book) and Floyd Burroughs (George Gudger), happened along. Fields, mistaking Evans for a sympathetic New Deal agent, invited the two strangers to his home—and there, at last, both knew they had found what they were looking for. They won the trust of the three families and, as daily visitors, spent a fortnight taking notes and pictures. Then they went off to Birmingham, Evans to develop some photographs, Agee to unwind his mind. Agee decided he had to think alone, and he drove off for a long day of self-search and sexual fantasy. He felt himself sucked as if by a whirlpool back to the three shacks. Burroughs asked him in and invited him to spend the night. Yearning to accept, but too shy to, he drove off in a downpour and soon skidded off the road—like his father, in an accident "half contrived," but, unlike his father, unscathed—and bogged the car immovably in the mud. He walked back

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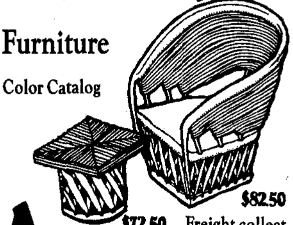

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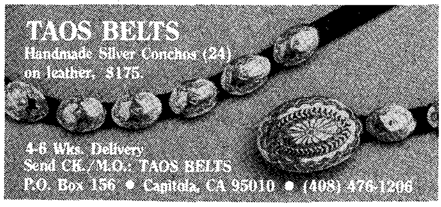

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to the Burroughses' through the rain and was warmly taken in, to stay many nights. He had bumbled into the masterpiece of his life.

MANY years later, speaking for a documentary film, "Agee," Elizabeth Tingle (Margaret Ricketts in the book), recalled the visitors:

> At the start it was a little hard for us to understand them, but I'll tell you, there wasn't any harm said to one, or anybody made fun of them or anything. You could understand them, but they just sounded funny. I asked Mr. Jimmy, I said, "What kind of sound does your voice got?" He said, "That is the Northern kind of talk. All of them up there's like that." But you know, when they left here, they got to where they was talking our kind of talk.

Agee began to think of himself and Evans as "spies"—for God, in His enmity to evil on earth. Ellie Mae Burroughs (Annie Mae Gudger), in retrospect, put a different gloss on that word:

> The big people, you know, the big bugs around Moundville, they would tell us that they were spies from Russia, and that they was trying to get all they could out of the United States. . . . Afraid they might tell us some way to get by, tell us some way to make a better living, so we wouldn't have to dig it out with them, you see. It was the landlords mostly. . . . I don't know what spies does, dear, but anyway we knowed that they wasn't going to hurt us, and they didn't.

Agee, intoxicated by the blessedness of the poor in spirit, dizzy with the intensity of his feelings of admiration, love, humility, anger, and guilt, wrote and wrote in the dark cabin at night, and finally it was time to go back to the other world, which had so quickly begun to seem unreal to him. Elizabeth Tingle recounted:

> They said they was leaving and wouldn't be back, and Mama's children cried; every one of us cried. They were so good to us, you know. They told us not to cry. "We'll be letting you hear from us," they said, which they did do. But it kind of hurt Jim, you know, that crying. And Ruth told them, she said, "You're going to leave and ain't never gonna come back." She was real little then.

During the time when Agee and Evans were in Alabama, Henry Luce decided that he had had enough of Marxist boring from within on his magazine of business, and that *Fortune* must set a more fittingly Republican course. The two men returned to the office in September to find that Luce had replaced Ralph Ingersoll as managing editor with the more amenable Eric Hodgins, and that Dwight Macdonald and Wilder Hobson were about to quit. Agee struggled with his piece. "Impossible," he wrote to Father Flye, "in any form and length *Fortune* can use; and I am now so stultified trying to do that, that I'm afraid I've lost ability to make it right in my own way." He submitted a draft, and Hodgins turned it down cold and ordered a rewrite—which Agee declined to do. He decided instead to see if he could get an advance from a book publisher on which to live, leave *Fortune*, and write about the three Alabama families in his "own way."

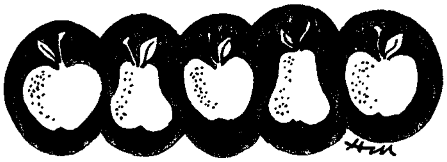
It happened that a former roommate of Via Agee's had just married an editor at Harper & Brothers, Edward Aswell. Aswell had lured Thomas Wolfe, whose torrential gushings Agee then transiently admired, away from Scribners, and when Via told the editor about her husband's book on three tenant farmers he began negotiating with Jim. Luce, however, told Agee that his text and Evans' photographs were the property of *Fortune;* he could forget the thievery of using them for a book of his own. It would do Agee no good to object that property *is* theft; he was stymied.

His life seemed then to fall apart. He began to drink heavily, mostly at Nick's, an all-night bar in Greenwich Village. Unhappy with Via, he began furtive gropings at every drunken gathering. At a tea party at Via's older sister's apartment, he encountered a musician named Alma Mailman, who had played in ensembles at the Saunderses' home in Clinton, and had been at the Agees' wedding. Three years younger than Jim, naïve, innocent, awkward, and ardent, she had come to New York for a career as a violinist. He soon told Walker Evans that he was falling for her. "Better watch out," Evans said. "You're going to get into trouble." At a party of people from Time, Inc., Jim chose Alma in a game of Sardines—an adolescents' game of paired hide-and-seek, which in those pre-orgy days sanctioned partner-swapping for brief sessions of feelies—and hid with her up on a roof. Via invited Alma to dinner one night; it poured rain; Alma was persuaded to stay the night; Jim sneaked out of his marital bed into Alma's. He tortured himself with guilt. Confiding the agony of his split self to a friend as they walked through Sheridan Square one evening, he bloodied his forehead knocking it against a brick wall.

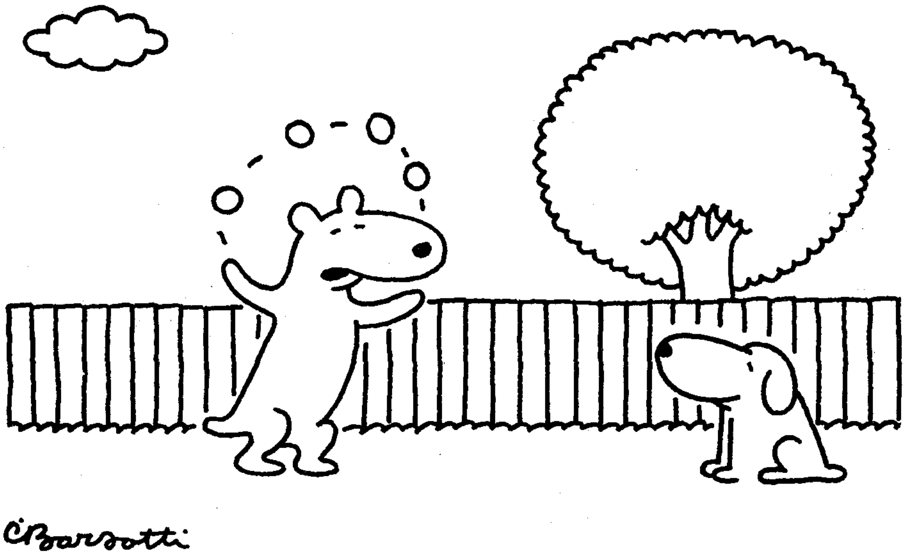
Unable to afford to quit *Fortune* altogether, he made a free-lance arrangement with the magazine. His first assignment, again with Evans, was to cover a luxury cruise in the Caribbean on the turboelectric liner Oriente. Via went, too, and Agee was delighted to have his wife and Evans pair off, sharing their quietness and reserve, while he wallowed in his disgust at the contrast between the frantic pleasure hunt around him on the ship and what he had idealized as the purity and perfection of the sharecroppers' lives.

Back in New York, Agee made a mad proposal to Alma—that they sneak off from Via to New Orleans, which he had long thought of as a magical city of jazz and sex and of oysters "as big as tennis shoes." They set off with eighty-five dollars between them. The trip turned out to be sleazy and grubby. On the way North again, they stopped in Alabama to see the Burroughses, who welcomed Jim ecstatically. He introduced Alma as his wife. They ate dinner, and he felt that he was with his own family; Alma went outside and vomited what she had eaten. After the meal, they all sang a hymn together, and Agee and Alma left. This time, it was true that he would never return—though it was also true that he would never again be wholly his best self anywhere else.

During 1937, his marriage reeled to an end in a melodrama of vacillations, accusations, self-loathing, and sexual impotence—while Evans and Via had an affair. Finally, Via sued for divorce; Luce relinquished the rights to the sharecropper story; Evans found a house for Agee in Frenchtown, New Jersey; Agee signed with Aswell; and he and Alma moved to the country at the beginning of 1938. His plan was to live for a year on his five-hundred-dollar advance and finish the book in that time.



IT wouldn't be quite that simple. "The first thing that happened," Alma said years later, "was Walker Evans coming with a crate of Scotch whiskey." Jim and Alma acted as if



"O.K., laugh, but this is going to be my ticket out of here."

• •

they were on an everlasting honeymoon, though they weren't yet married. They were playing house. Jim bought Alma a baby goat, and its constant bleating (among other things) kept Jim from working. One day, Alma pretended that Jim was a poodle, and tied a blue ribbon in his hair. Some church ladies came to call, and Jim the poodle dressed for showing went to the door and let them in. Through the winter and spring of 1938, he struggled with the writing. He read passages to Alma, who loved them because she loved him. He wrote Father Flye that he was "disintegrating and 'growing up' simultaneously."

He turned restless, took trips to New York, and finally put aside the sharecropper book in favor of a return to the Knoxville novel. He submitted a passage of the latter, set in the summer of 1915, to Dwight Macdonald, who, with Mary McCarthy, William Phillips, Philip Rahv, and Delmore Schwartz, was now editing *Partisan Review;* they accepted the piece. Edward Aswell shocked Jim by suddenly setting a deadline of August 1st for delivery of the Alabama book. Agee bombarded Father Flye, Fitzgerald, and Evans with complaints: "long blind-streak;" "eight or ten drafts of a thing finally not even to be used;" "Several times a day it becomes physically impossible for me to sit and write." Aswell extended the deadline to September 1st, November 1st, December 1st. Jim's eyes began a worrisome trembling; he developed boils in both ears. In a mad act of compassion, he and Alma took a hobo into their home. In December, they were married, paid their rent, and found they had twelve dollars and fifty cents. Jim decided to return to New York, where Wilder Hobson had offered him a rent-free house in Brooklyn, and where he could earn money from free-lance articles for *Fortune*. They left the hobo in Frenchtown, but a friend later remembered that they took the goat along. When Hobson visited them once, he saw a graffito written on the front steps by kids: "The Man Who Lives Here Is a Looney."

Fortune assigned Agee an article about Brooklyn for an issue that the magazine was preparing on New York City. He wrote it, *Fortune* rejected it. He puttered away the spring in a low mood. He encouraged Evans to like Alma; indeed, he perversely wanted him not just to like her but to love her. In May of 1939, he received from Macdonald a *Partisan Review* list of "Some Questions Which Face American Writers Today." He was so outraged by the hoity-toity tone of the questionnaire that he decided to scald it in his book.

Summer came, and, so that Jim could resume work on the book, he and Alma rented a decrepit stone house, Monk's Farm, in Stockton, New Jersey, for twenty-five dollars a month—quarters that were somewhat, but not much, above sharecroppers' standards. There was no bathroom. "All God's outdoors," Agee told his visitors, "is a toilet!" He read his drafts aloud to a series of guests, to great praise. But the mood of the nation had been inexorably shifting, like a continental plate; his topic was no longer earthshaking. The Depression had waned. Radios echoed with distant shouts of "*Heil Hitler!*" Furthermore, in May, John Steinbeck's enormously successful book "The Grapes of Wrath" had preempted readers' pity for the dispossessed.

Father Flye visited, and one day Jim felt he was ready to deliver the book to Aswell. He and the priest set off in Agee's flivver. On the way to New York, Jim suddenly decided that one part of the book needed rewriting, and they turned around and went back. Toward the end of August, he finally handed in his manuscript, entitled "Three Tenant Families." A few days later, the Nazi armies swept into Poland. The last thing on the public mind was the plight of the sharecropper. Agee was flat broke. Aswell took forever to respond, and when he finally did his comments were humiliating. He wanted to excise the obscenities from the text, deplored the higgledy-piggledy form, and objected to Agee's labyrinthine sentences. Agee, desperate for the remaining five hundred dollars of his advance, agreed to make changes if Aswell would print his protest against them in the front of the book. Soon Aswell called Agee and Evans in and told them that the firm had decided to reject the book, and that he doubted if any other publisher would take it.

Agee hit bottom. Three years' work and the deepest engagement of heart and mind of his whole life had been wasted. He now had to suffer the shame of borrowing money from Evans to rent some dingy rooms at 322 West Fifteenth Street, in a bleak zone of warehouses and factories. He had nothing to do, except to go on scribbling on the pages of his manuscript. He changed the title to "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men." He drank. At the lowest point of his degradation, he persuaded Evans and Alma, who was pregnant, to have sex with each other while he sat at the foot of the bed watching them, with tears pouring down his cheeks.

Then, as had so often happened, a friend threw him a life preserver. Robert Fitzgerald had been given charge of the book section of *Time*, and he persuaded T. S. Matthews, the editor of the back of the book and a prince among Luce hirelings, to take Agee, at forty-five dollars a week. A sensitive and literate craftsman, Matthews had tucked under his wing a remarkable brood of writers. Besides Fitzgerald, they included Wilder Hobson, the novelist and essayist Louis Kronenberger, and two leftists, the novelist Robert Cantwell and a gifted book reviewer named Calvin Fixx. (A son of Fixx's, James, would turn out, decades later, to be the unfortunate avatar of the fad of jogging, who died while jogging.) Agee's officemate was the apostate Communist Whittaker Chambers, later to be the famous accuser of Alger Hiss. These were writers with such distinctive voices, even in stagy, anonymous timestyle, that I could tell at once, reading each issue, who among them had written what.

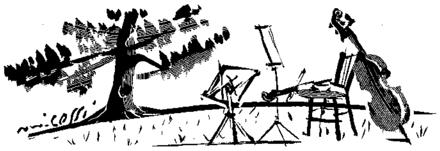
In this company, in a room on the twenty-ninth floor of the new Time-Life Building, in Rockefeller Center, with views of the skating rink below and of the Hudson to the west, living a life much less oppressive than the one he had had at *Fortune*, reading books of his own choice and writing reviews sympathetically edited by Matthews, and finding that he was fascinated by the quirky, half-mad Chambers, whose eyes were hooded with paranoia, and whose teeth were even more horrendously cigarette-stained and root-sprung than his own—in this heady setting, Jim bounced back, and before long had earned his editor's respect and, to some extent, his own self-respect. It was at about this time that I met him at Hobson's party, and soon I, like everyone else on the staff, reverberated to the beautiful arias of James Agee in the book section and knew that he was the best writer *Time* had ever had.

About a year later, Eunice Clark, a Vassar graduate who had known Jim when she was a researcher at *Fortune*, had heard him on country weekends read passages from his book, and had become a talent scout for Houghton Mifflin, the Boston publishers, took the manuscript of "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" to Paul Brooks, the top editor of the firm. He and Robert Linscott, another editor, read the book and at once recognized a work of great oddity and power in a deep American vein of dissent, worthy of being ranked with some of Hawthorne and Melville and Thoreau. The obscenities would be a problem, but Brooks offered to publish whatever words were legal to print in Massachusetts, and Agee accepted that sensible suggestion. Agee urged Brooks to produce the book on newsprint, to make it cheap enough for tenant farmers to buy. Brooks pointed out that newsprint would crumble to powder in a handful of years. "That might be a good idea," Agee said. But, of course, he was talked out of the notion.

Success terrified Agee, and his personal life again fell into disarray. He met a tall, elegant Austrian émigrée, Mia Fritsch, who had taken a job as a researcher for *Fortune*, and before long, as Alma was coming to term, Jim and Mia began an affair. Cool, cultured, yet bohemian, Mia was Jim's equal intellectually, and she accepted him as he was. Alma gave birth to a son, Joel. Three weeks later, in a familiar agony of guilt and vacillation, Agee confessed to his wife that he had been unfaithful with Mia Fritsch, blaming sexual deprivation in the last trimester of Alma's pregnancy and vowing that from then on Alma would have his whole heart. But Alma became hysterically jealous. She tried several times to run away from him. Once, he chased her down their apartment stairs and pulled her back by her hair; then, to show his remorse, he banged his head against the apartment wall and boxed his own ears. She went to his office one day to say she was going to take Joel to Mexico. He threw one leg over the windowsill and threatened to jump. She called his bluff and walked away to the elevator, but then panicked and ran back, to find him hiding behind the door. Agee went on seeing Mia, and finally, when Joel was a year old, Alma did in fact pack off to Mexico.

Agee mourned this further loss in his life; the hot scars in his skin multiplied. He wrote Fitzgerald that he was "punch-drunk," and that a sense of failure weighed "constantly in the bottom of my gut." In the spring and summer, though, with Mia's help, he got his spirits back, revising his book yet again and then correcting proofs.

In August, 1941, five years after the trip to Alabama, "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" was published.



"THE very blood and semen of journalism . . . is a broad and successful form of lying," James Agee wrote in this classic work of metajournalism. "Remove that form of lying and you no longer have journalism." At the beginning of his book, he expressed his revulsion against what he himself had seemed to be abetting *Fortune* in doing:

> It seems to me curious, not to say obscene and thoroughly terrifying, that it could occur to an association of human beings drawn together through need and chance and for profit into a company, an organ of journalism, to pry intimately into the lives of an undefended and appallingly damaged group of human beings, an ignorant and helpless rural family, for the purpose of parading the nakedness, disadvantage and humiliation of these lives before another group of human beings, in the name of science, of "honest journalism" (whatever that paradox may mean).

While other writers for the company that he here excoriated—Dwight Macdonald, Archibald MacLeish, Robert Fitzgerald, Louis Kronenberger, Whittaker Chambers, Theodore H. White, Charles Wertenbaker, and I, among many others—quit or were fired in droves, Jim Agee stayed on and on. His stint for the magazine that sent him to Alabama had lasted three weary (and deceitful?) years. Then came *Time*. When Luce and his partner, Briton Hadden, founded that magazine, they decided to put a fictitious name, Peter Mathews, on the masthead, so that if a large corporation bridled at something they published and threatened to yank its advertising they could blame the offending piece on "a young writer named Peter Mathews" and angrily "fire" him, taking the name off the masthead. An irony tied to this bald intention of journalistic mendacity is that while other names rapidly came and went, those of Peter Mathews and James Agee hung together on the masthead year after year. Agee's was there for nine years.

What kept it there? Did he have, all that time, "a sort of hard, masochistic liking" for the job? Was he, in a sense, moonlighting for the sake of more important movements of his mind off the job? Or was it just that he was a victim of the passive, vacillating drift of his temperament, which caused many crucial events of his life to seem to happen *to* him, often thanks to the merciful last-minute nudging of friends?

What needs to be pointed out first is that we would not have the treasure of "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" if Jim Agee had not been working as a journalist for Henry Luce. The job had in it a special challenge for Agee—to try to set truth free in what he saw as the headquarters of lying. His kind of truth, Robert Fitzgerald would write, was quite simply "correspondence between what is said and what is the case." As a poet fights the rigid metres of his chosen prosodies to allow the living truth of speech rhythms to shine through, so Agee fought "the primal cliché and complacency of journalism," embedded in its traditional demands for the who, what, where, when, and why, to enable himself to set *reality* before the reader, as nearly as James Agee could photograph it through the lenses of his eyes and record it through the microphones of his ears and clarify it through the delicate filter of his consciousness.

To accomplish this in the writing of "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men," he knew he would have to transcend traditional journalism, but he realized he could not, for his purposes, fall back on any of the known stratagems of poetry or of word painting—of literary "art." He described this difficulty in an unsuccessful application for a Guggenheim Fellowship as he was starting work on the book. The text, he wrote,

> is to be as exhaustive a reproduction and analysis of personal experience, including the phases and problems of memory and recall and revisitation and the problems of writing and of communication, as I am capable of, with constant bearing on two points: to tell everything possible as accurately as possible: and to invent nothing. It involves therefore as total a suspicion of "creative" and "artistic" as of "reportorial" attitudes and methods, and it is likely therefore to involve the development of some more or less new forms of writing and of observation.

Develop them he did. There had never been, and there will never be, anything quite like this book. For one thing, tones of light and dark in the visible world had always seemed to his delicate sensibility almost audible, and in the book he strove through the sounds and meaning of words to mimic—no, more than mimic, achieve—photography, worthy of being set beside that of his collaborator, Walker Evans. Ever since Exeter, he had adored pictures, both moving and still. He heard a kind of verbal music in the Civil War photographs of Mathew Brady, and the grainy, pale light in the photography of Erich von Stroheim's "Greed" had made him vibrate like a tuning fork. Agee wanted to make words *become* people and things.

But he saw difficulties. Freud and Marx and semanticists like I. A. Richards had complicated the very idea of "truth." Meaning itself had shades of meaning, objective and subjective. When the reality of a thing was rendered in words, it took the shape of its truth in two minds—those of the writer and of the reader. On the writer's part, eyes and ears and the other senses might be objective enough, but the filter of consciousness was something else. Each writer's "truth" about each separate "thing" would be different. Agee struggled in "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" to set up a counterpoint between stark verbal photographs and—as if to provide glasses to help the reader see the pictures more clearly—long passages of filtration of their substance through his deeply kind, generous, quirky, guilt-ridden, hypersensitive consciousness. The result is a work partly documentary and partly autobiographical and confessional on very high and sometimes difficult planes—those, at times, of St. Augustine, of Pascal, and, in a more worldly sense, of Joyce.

His was the consciousness of a moralist, one in whom anger against wrong and injustice burned hotly, but also one in whom conviction was forever being shaken by doubt. Robert Fitzgerald, a devout believer, said that "the religious sense of life is at the heart of all of Agee's work." Agee had indeed taken from the altar at St. Andrew's School a soaring sense of wonder and mystery, and he had absorbed from the Good Book the intensity of the anger of Jeremiah and of Isaiah and of Christ tipping over the counters of the money changers; but he had also often seen, and hated, in the church and its adherents, piousness, bigotry, hypocrisy, and seeds of the guilt that endlessly tortured him. Father Flye, on first reading Agee's book, wrote him, "I find in it a sympathy, a love, a care for human beings, which make me think of our Lord; I call it in a true sense deeply religious." But Agee replied, "What you write of the book needless to say is good to hear to the point of shaming me—for it is a sinful book at least in all degrees

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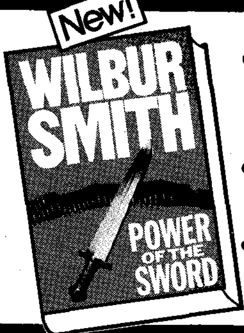

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of ‘falling short of the mark’ and I think in more corrupt ways as well.”

His political consciousness was that of a revolutionary, but one who saw that all revolutionaries are fallible human beings, often wicked, cruel, power-mad. Among the many items that crowd the front matter of the book, there stands the Marxist battle cry “Workers of the world, unite and fight. You have nothing to lose but your chains, and a world to win.” But a footnote at once puts that shout in a strange, distorting echo chamber. Fitzgerald, discussing Agee’s politics, told how he endlessly examined all sides of every question and found that “all sides turned out to be unsatisfactory in the end,” adding, “And they did, of course. He was right.” This moralist was not, as that footnote makes clear, “the property of any political party, faith, or faction.” He was purely driven—and wanted the reader to be commanded—by the instruction in the lines from “King Lear” on the page facing the words from the Communist Manifesto: “Take physick, pomp; /Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel.”

The moralist set forth his aim in the book as grimly as an ancient prophet:

> I am not at all trying to lay out a thesis, far less to substantiate or to solve. I do not consider myself qualified. I know only that murder is being done, against nearly every individual in the planet, and that there are dimensions and correlations of cure which not only are not being used but appear to be scarcely considered or suspected. I know there is cure, even now available, if only it were available, in science and in the fear and joy of God. This is only a brief personal statement of these convictions: and my self-disgust is less in my ignorance, and far less in my “failure” to “defend” or “support” the statement, than in my inability to state it even so far as I see it, and in my inability to blow out the brains with it of you who take what it is talking of lightly, or not seriously enough.

It was at once clear that there would be those who would not respond with pleasure to this hectoring tone. The first big review of the book, by Ralph Thompson in the *Times*, was scathing. Agee, he wrote, was “arrogant, mannered, precious, gross,” and his book was “the choicest recent example of how to write self-inspired, self-conscious, and self-indulgent prose.” This notice was ruinous for sales. Agee’s friends were somewhat but not much kinder. Selden Rodman, who had excerpted passages from the book in his magazine *Common Sense*, wrote in the *Saturday Review* that although the book might make a reader “throw down the volume in rage, and curse the author for a confused adolescent, an Ezra Pound in Wolfe’s clothing, a shocking snob, or a belligerent mystic posing with a purple pencil on the Left Bank of *Fortune*,” it nevertheless had “greatness and unique quality.” Harvey Breit, whose wife had helped type the manuscript, wrote in the *New Republic* that “Mr. Agee does a good deal to antagonize the reader” but that his devices were admirable and that he wrote brilliantly and was “extraordinarily sensitive.” At *Time*, Matthews assigned the book to Fitzgerald but then rejected his “stiff and reverent” review and wrote one himself, hailing the book as “the most distinguished failure of the season.”

It certainly was a flop in the bookstores. By the end of the year, it had sold only a few more than six hundred copies. And before the end of the year Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor, and the American mind had gone off to war.

A year later—too late—the book finally got its due. Lionel Trilling, of Columbia University, then the brightest rising star among New York intellectuals, wrote an evaluation of the book in *Kenyon Review:*

> I feel sure that this is a great book. . . . Agee has a sensibility so precise, so unremitting, that it is sometimes appalling; and though nothing can be more tiresome than protracted sensibility, Agee’s never wearies us: I think this is because it is brilliantly normal and because it is a moral rather than a physical sensibility. . . . The book is full of marvelous writing which gives a kind of hot pleasure that words can do so much.

But Trilling took notice of what he saw as the one weakness in the book, “a failure of moral realism”:

> It lies in Agee’s inability to see these people as anything but good. Not that he falsifies what is apparent: for example he can note with perfect directness their hatred of Negroes; and not that he is ever pious or sentimental, like Steinbeck and Hemingway. But he writes of his people as if there were no human unregenerateness in them, no flicker of malice or meanness, no darkness or wildness of feeling, only a sure and simple virtue, the growth, we must suppose, of their hard, unlovely poverty. He shuts out, that is, what is part of the moral job to take in. What creates this falsification is guilt—the observer’s guilt at his own relative freedom. Agee is perfectly conscious of this guilt and it is in order to take it into account that he gives us so many passages of autobiography and self-examination; he wants the reader to be aware of what is peculiar and distorting in the recording instrument, himself. . . .
>
> And yet, even when this failure has been noted, Agee’s text still is, it seems to me, the most realistic and the most important moral effort of our American generation.

Agee accepted the initial failure of “Let Us Now Praise Famous Men” as if he had expected it. He went on with the rest of his brief life, into which he managed to cram three distinct new careers.

Not long after the publication of the book, Robert Fitzgerald came back to *Time* from a leave he had taken to write poetry, and this gave Agee a chance to persuade Matthews to shift him from books to cinema. With the thud of his own book already silenced in his mind, and having been excused, with *Time’s* help, from serving in a war he despised, he now lived in a heaven of darkened houses. Ever since Exeter, he had regarded movies as *the* American art form, flickering with all that was best and worst in the culture. His book had earned him a few hundred readers; his *Time* reviews reached several million. *Time’s* style and cramped space rankled, though; as he wrote, he drank till he was dulled, then took Benzedrine to resharpen himself. In late 1942, Margaret Marshall, the editor of *The Nation’s* critical columns, invited Agee to do moonlighting reviews for that magazine, and *Time* gave him permission. Soon Agee was writing stunning criticism for *The Nation*, many examples of which outlived the films they examined. Film-buff Agee readers cohered into a cult.

In 1948, “Let Us Now Praise Famous Men” fizzled unnoticed out of print, having sold only 1,025 copies. Agee resigned from both *Time* and *The Nation* and embraced a new craft—that of novelist. He had already started work on two novels at once, both of them autobiographical and both overhung with a fox fire of death. One, to be entitled “The Morning Watch,” would tell of a boy’s vigil at a school like St. Andrew’s in contemplation of the crucifixion of Jesus; at the end of the book, the boy was (as Agee had been and always would be) “through with religion but still carrying a deep load of it.” A taut text of only a hundred and twenty pages, it was published in 1951 to faint praise and a very short shelf life. The other, which would be "A Death in the Family," was a reliving of the pain of the loss of his father. He would wrestle with the rich and eloquent writing of this novel for the rest of his life.

The third of the careers that followed his "failed" masterpiece was as a writer of film scripts. As early as 1937 and 1939, he had done two exercises in screenwriting: a scenario entitled "Notes for a Moving Picture: The House," and another based on a harrowing scene in Malraux's "Man's Fate." Neither was filmed. Two of Agee's heroes in the movie world were Charlie Chaplin and John Huston. In 1946, the year after the atomic bombs had been dropped, he started "Dedication Day," a bitter mock celebration of a victory bought by horror—a script that, after several mutations, he hoped Charlie Chaplin might make into a film. Nothing came of it. He had praised Huston's films, especially "The Battle of San Pietro" and "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre," and shortly after Agee left *Time* Huston helped him get a contract with a fledgling producer, Huntington Hartford, to write a script based on Stephen Crane's story "The Blue Hotel." It was brilliant but unfilmable. Agee wrote a long profile of Huston for *Life*, and Huston hired him to write a screenplay adapting the C. S. Forester adventure novel "The African Queen." The success of that film brought Agee other offers, and he subsequently wrote, among other things, scripts for "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," from another Crane story; a television series on Lincoln for "Omnibus;" "Noa Noa," on Gauguin; and "The Night of the Hunter," an adaptation of a popular gothic novel, for Charles Laughton to direct.

Through the years of these various lives, Agee's behavior and his body were both abrading badly. Mia bore him four children; the first of them died in an incubator, forty hours old. Jim was repeatedly and carelessly and grossly unfaithful to her, and grew more and more violent in his frustrations and guilt and feelings of failure, but Mia cleaved to him, buoyed him, and, after his heart began to fray, nursed him. He could detect—and he hated—the frittering away of his gifts. Angina seemed a kind of punishment. In low times all through his life, self-loathing and suicide had hung at the edge of his mind. In the end, as it turned out, he jumped to his death by indirection; he was defenestrated from the upper stories of life, as if in slow motion, by alcohol, nicotine, insomnia, overwork, misused sex, and searing guilt, and—above all, we can guess—by his anger and despair at finding that with all his wild talent he had never been able to write the whole of the universe down on the head of a pin. On May 16, 1955, James Rufus Agee died of a broken heart in a New York taxicab. He was only forty-five years old.

At his death, Agee was, in worldly reckoning, just what he had thought he was—a failure. His entire estate was four hundred and fifty dollars in a New York bank account. Nothing of his—not his book of poems, "Permit Me Voyage," not "The Morning Watch," not "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men"—was in print, nothing at all save some scraps in anthologies. Except by a handful of friends and a few New York cognoscenti who knew his worth, he was soon forgotten.

Within ten years, this same James Agee was praised as a famous man.

One of Agee's friends, David McDowell, who had attended St. Andrew's after him, had met him through Father Flye, and had grown faithfully close to him, formed a publishing firm, McDowell, Obolensky, and two years after Agee's death he published "A Death in the Family." The novel was a huge success, both critically and commercially, and it won the Pulitzer Prize. Within three years after that, McDowell had published two volumes of "Agee on Film," Agee's criticism in one and five film scripts in the other; Houghton Mifflin had reissued "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men," which eventually sold almost sixty thousand copies; and "All the Way Home," Tad Mosel's adaptation for the stage of "A Death in the Family," had been a Broadway hit and won a Pulitzer. And within three more years George Braziller had published "James Agee's Letters to Father Flye," and David Susskind had produced a film version of "All the Way Home."

The new edition of "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" arrived on a scene very different from the wartime one in which it had first been exposed. In 1960, America's social consciousness seemed to be standing up and stretching after a long nap. The civil-rights movement had gained impetus from the Supreme Court school-desegregation decision, a few years before, and then from Rosa Parks' refusal to move to the back of a bus and Martin Luther King, Jr.,'s eloquence and radiant acts of civil disobedience. John Kennedy was elected president the year the book reappeared, and there followed, in a decade of growing turmoil, the agonies and violence and aspirations of Southern sit-ins, the Mississippi voter-registration summer, the Vietnam War, the draft, campus unrest, LSD, rock and roll, the rise of the feminist movement, race riots in Northern cities, appalling assassinations, and an upheaval in social and cultural values that left the country changed forever.

Those were the years when "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" became a kind of Bible, especially for bright young people who, like James Agee, had the privilege of attending good schools and colleges. Those children were delicately tuned to Agee's irony and idealism and guilt, and his wondrous susceptibility to unpeeled emotions. His excesses and inconsistencies were their norms. When he wrote that "a Harvard education is by no means an unqualified advantage," students from Bowdoin to Berkeley cheered. Young men incarcerated in colleges, as they saw it, because of the Vietnam draft thought Agee spoke for them when he wrote, " 'Education' as it stands is tied in with every bondage"—and, agreeing with him, further, that education "is the chief cause of these bondages," they were moved to capture college buildings and trash their campuses. Half deafened by rock and roll, they loved his praise of loud music, not noticing that he wrote only of amplifying Beethoven and Schubert. They were delighted by his wondering whether tenant farmers, who were "among the only 'honest' and 'beautiful' users of language," should be forced to become literate by semi-literate teachers—apparently not noticing that he also quoted Kafka, Blake, Céline. They could laugh at his epigraph for his section on "Money," which, intending irony, quoted the patrician Franklin Roosevelt as saying, "You are farmers; I am a farmer myself," for they didn't remember—probably weren't even aware—that this gentleman farmer Roosevelt had in fact

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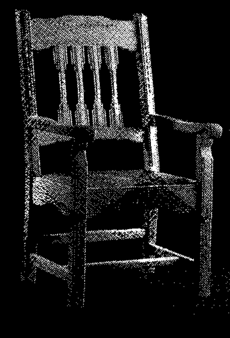

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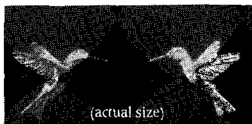

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greatly improved the lot of the tenant farmer. Above all—a redeeming trait in that wounded generation—they shared the symptoms of the "failure of moral realism" that Trilling had seen in Agee's book: the elements of both courage and guilt in his compassion for the downtrodden.

In the hot summer of 1964, I went —I, too, as a journalist—to Holmes County, Mississippi, and I lived for a time in a small house with a poor and very brave black farmer and his wife and their many children. All around us were the Northern white college kids who had risked their lives—and those of their black hosts—by invading the state that summer to help with voter registration. An astonishing number of them had brought Agee along with them. They gave his book to the young blacks of the Student Nonviolent Coördinating Committee. White and black alike, those young people, whose partnership that summer left its mark on a changing South, were shocked and motivated by the naked fraternity of Jim Agee's desperate impulse to humble himself before the black couple he met on a back road in Alabama, his urge to throw himself down and kiss their feet. The students who had read Agee's book "failed" that summer and went back North, but not many years later a black mayor was elected in the town nearest to where I stayed.

The appeal to American readers of "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" has reached far beyond the troubled sixties. There lies deep in the Judeo-Christian American psyche a powerful nostalgia for lost innocence and spent decency, and it is perhaps this nostalgia that has continued to open readers' minds to Agee's enormous humanity and pity and sorrow. He certainly did, as Trilling pointed out, idealize his three tenant families. Love idealizes, and one of the attractive things about Agee's writing is that, with all his remarkably skeptical intelligence, and despite his many declared doubts and weaknesses, he was capable of copious, unsentimental, generous, searing love.

But there is another reason for the lasting appeal of "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men"—one that raises the complex and troubling substance of the book to feverish, ecstatic pitch. This lies in the quirkiness and uneven flow and the many surprises and dazzling beauty of the prose Agee devised in an effort to solve his journalistic riddle. This prose has the effect, finally, of enlarging the figures of the tale, until they become mythic, like Ahab, like Hester Prynne, like the children in "The Sound and the Fury."

A JOURNALIST, in any effort to render truth, has three responsibilities: to his reader, to his conscience, and to his human subjects. What did Agee's tenant families think of how he had fulfilled his responsibility to them? Had he, with his "failure of moral realism," failed them? Years later, Ellie Mae Burroughs admitted that when the book came out the families had mixed feelings about it. Some members were proud of being "famous," but there was also talk of the shame of being photographed "half dressed," and talk—as there so often is when even the faintest scent of money hangs on the air—of suing the authors. But Mrs. Burroughs told that she had said then, "Well, I don't know what you're going to sue them for, 'cause I wouldn't want to hurt 'em if I could, because they was too good to me."

Mrs. Burroughs said:

> We wasn't the onliest ones that had it hard, you know. Everybody did at that *time. . . . We didn't believe that times* would ever get any better with us; [Jim] was trying to encourage me that they would. He told me that I might not live to see it, but my children would have a better living than we was having then. But I couldn't believe it. But I'll have to say he was right, not that we're rich now, but one thing I can say is that they got their own homes, and they got a better living. They have anything they want near 'bout. He was right. I did live to see it.

With an authority no one could deny, Mrs. Burroughs gave "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" its ultimate book review:

> I don't guess it's been over ten years ago that I seen the book, if it's been that long. My daughter got one of 'em; I don't know where in the world she got it, but she got it and told me she had it, and she wanted me to look at it and give it to me. And I took it home and I read it plumb through. And when I read it plumb through I give it back to her and I said, "Well everything in there's true." What they wrote in there was true.

—JOHN HERSEY

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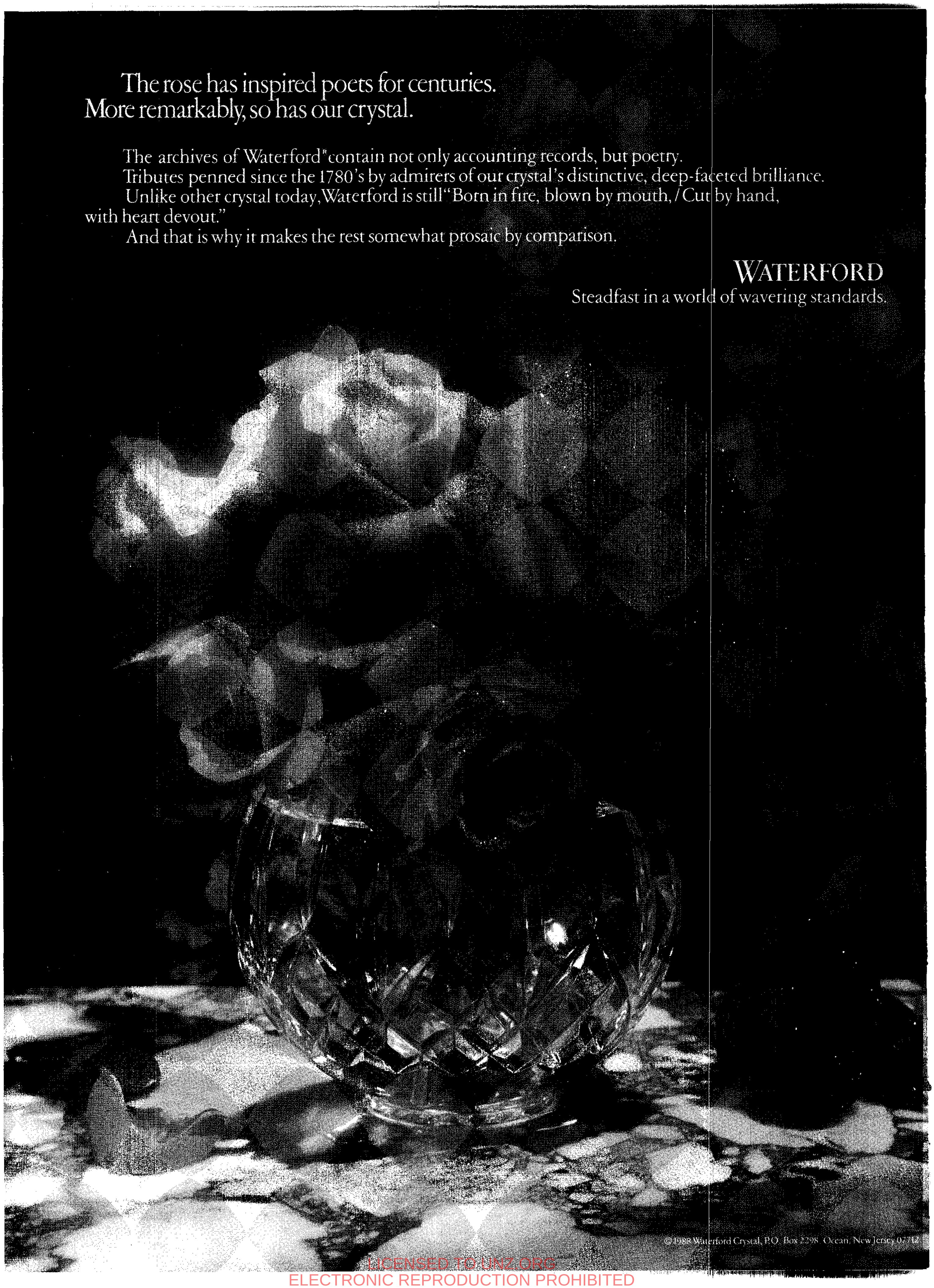

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